

EUROPE AFTER THE WAR OF 1914

Geographia Ltd., 66 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4





# THE WAR OF 1939

VOLUME I



## THE KING'S MESSAGE

IN this grave hour, perhaps the most fateful in our history, I send to every household of my people, both at home and overseas, this message, spoken with the same depth of feeling for each one of you as if I were able to cross your threshold and speak to you myself.

For the second time in the lives of most of us we are at war.

Over and over again we have tried to find a peaceful way out of the differences between ourselves and those who are now our enemies.

But it has been in vain.

We have been forced into a conflict. For we are called with our Allies to meet the challenge of a principle which, if it were to prevail, would be fatal to any civilized order in the world.

It is the principle which permits a State, in the selfish pursuit of power, to disregard its treaties and its solemn pledges ; which sanctions the use of force or threat of force against the sovereignty and independence of other States.

Such a principle, stripped of all disguise, is surely the mere primitive doctrine that might is right ; and if this principle were established throughout the world the freedom of our own country and of the whole British Commonwealth of nations would be in danger.

But far more than this—the peoples of the world would be kept in the bondage of fear and all hopes of settled peace and of the security of justice and liberty among nations would be ended.

This is the ultimate issue which confronts us.

For the sake of all that we ourselves hold dear and of the world's order and peace, it is unthinkable that we should refuse to meet the challenge.

It is to this high purpose that I now call my people at home and my people across the seas who will make our cause their own.

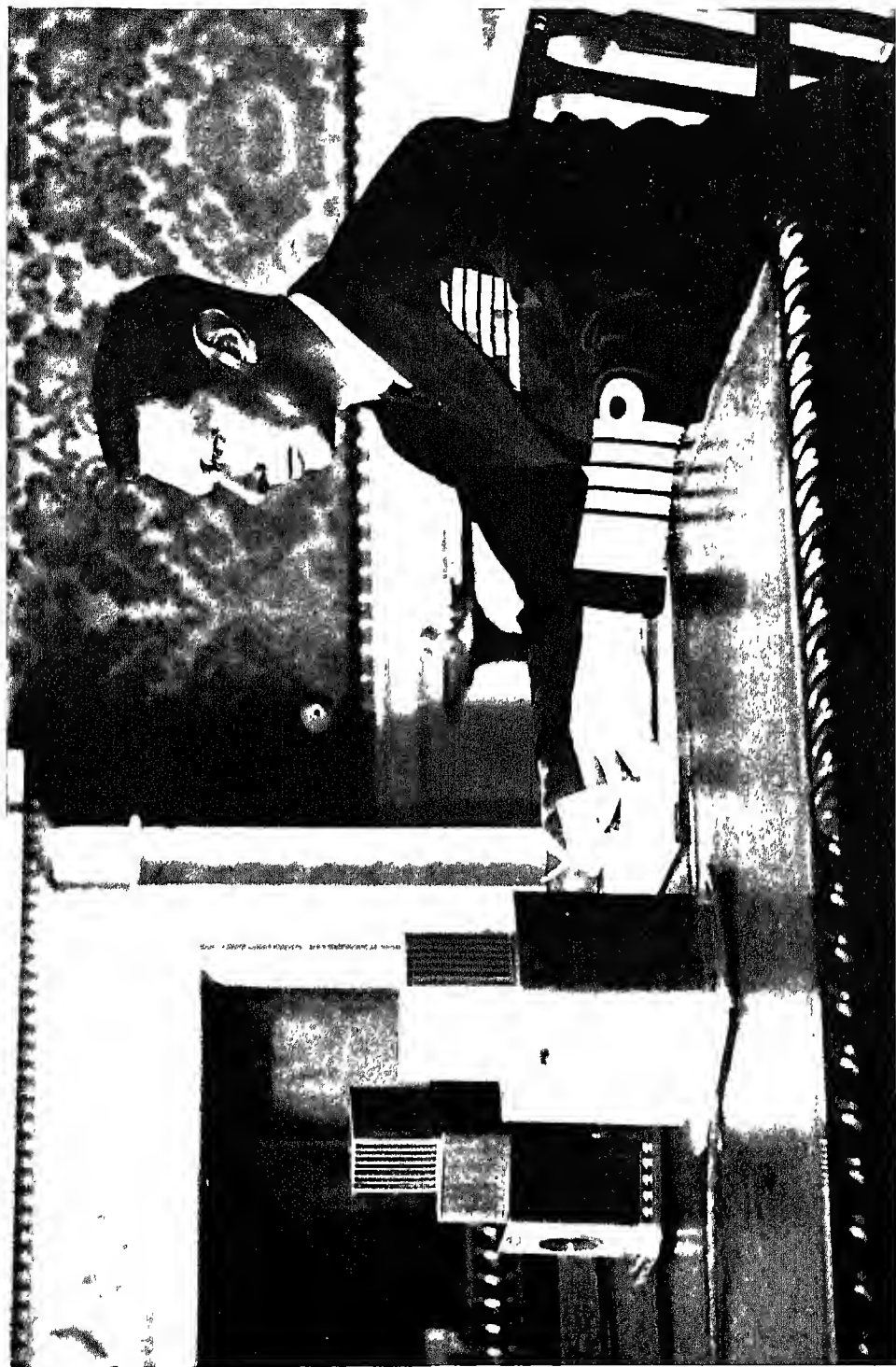
I ask them to stand calm and firm and united in this time of trial.

The task will be hard. There may be dark days ahead and war can no longer be confined to the battlefield.

But we can only do the right as we see the right and reverently commit our cause to God.

If one and all we keep resolutely faithful to it, ready for whatever service or sacrifice it may demand, then, with God's help, we shall prevail.

May He bless and keep us all.



H.M. THE KING BROADCASTING FROM BUCKINGHAM PALACE ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3RD, 1939



# THE WAR OF 1939

A HISTORY DEALING WITH EVERY PHASE OF THE  
WAR ON LAND, SEA, AND IN THE AIR, INCLUDING  
THE EVENTS WHICH LED UP TO THE OUTBREAK  
OF HOSTILITIES

EDITED BY  
VERNON BARTLETT, M.P.

AND  
W. GORDON WILLIAMS



VOLUME I

THE CAXTON PUBLISHING COMPANY LIMITED  
CLUN HOUSE, SURREY STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

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## PREFACE

HISTORY is usually regarded as a record of the distant past. This is a history of the present : of a war in which Great Britain and France have been forced to take up arms in the defence of their conception of civilization against wanton aggression : a war for the preservation of the freedom of small nations and peoples against confiscation. There is, in British and French minds, no desire for self-aggrandisement nor thought of material gain. There is, on the contrary, the certain knowledge that vast material sacrifice must be made if nations are to be given that freedom from fear without which human progress becomes impossible.

Newspapers and wireless tell us almost hourly of the happenings in the conflict on land and sea and in the air. For this very reason we are only too apt to lose the true significance of current events. The loss of an aeroplane, the torpedoing of a liner with a thousand souls aboard, however tragic they are, may in themselves be merely minor incidents of a great war.

On the other hand, twenty and fifty and a hundred years hence, historians will examine and sift the activities of the present in the light of subsequent events, and will judge dispassionately the wisdom or folly of the actions and theories of today.

A history such as this, written while the conflict is still raging, comes between the two. It can correct the possible errors and exaggerations of the news of the moment, but it will have none of the aridity almost inseparable, however skilled the historian, from a history of the dead past. This will be living history : history which each one of us—sailor, soldier, or airman ; politician or ploughman ; munition worker, doctor, or housewife—is engaged in making. Every grade of society, every active person in the country, is intimately and personally concerned in the carrying on of the war to a successful conclusion.

This, therefore, will be a contemporary chronicle of events which should also form a permanent and valuable record. It will be a record compiled by skilled and carefully selected writers all qualified to judge swiftly and accurately the trend of events, to interpret truly by their comments the ebb and flow of this titanic struggle for freedom in all its

angles. It will form also a social document in that it will record the prosecution and effects of the war at home as well as at the front, on land and water, and in the air. War today comes to our front doors. It is no longer confined to frontiers and battlefields. In this age of aeroplanes and the menace of the bomb and poison gas, the "Home Front" is no mere figure of speech. In this history the people of the Home Front will therefore be shown taking their part in the war. Science, agriculture, feeding the nation as well as the fighting forces, finance, social activities, and countless other aspects, will have to be dealt with as they arise.

For that reason the volumes comprising this history will not appear at stereotyped and stated intervals—they will be issued as events dictate. The first volume deals solely with events that led up to the war—the history of Europe and the activities of European rulers and statesmen between the signing of the Treaty of Versailles and the outbreak of the War of 1939—for it is only by considering these vital factors that we can gain a real grip of the present conflict. The second volume tells of the early days of the war, and carries us up to the end of November 1939 with all its harrowing details and diplomatic manoeuvres—the rape of Poland, the stagnation on the Western Front, the battles in the air and on the sea, and the awakening growls of the Russian Bear. Later volumes will carry us on through periods of hope and disappointment, victory and defeat, and it is the sincere wish of the compilers that they may be proud of the resulting collection—of which they must be the severest critics.

VERNON BARTLETT.  
W. GORDON WILLIAMS.

LONDON, 1940.

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# THE WAR OF 1939

## VOLUME I

### CHAPTER I

#### GERMANY BETWEEN TWO WARS

BY VERNON BARTLETT

ONE cold rainy night in April 1919 the German delegation to the Peace Conference arrived at a little station between Paris and Versailles. The welcome it received was as cold as the weather. A little correct heel-clicking and bowing, and Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau and his colleagues drove away in cars and omnibuses to the Hôtel des Reservoirs at Versailles, behind which a small area of the park had been fenced off for their benefit and from which lanes of parallel wooden fences made paths to neighbouring hotels and offices where they had to work. This was to be no conference, but a ceremony at which they were to sign along the dotted line their acceptance of a treaty drawn up after three months of difficult negotiations between the Allied and Associated Powers.

The Germans were allowed to make comments on the document, and they did so with vigour and at length, but with very minor modifications as a result of their protests. This is regrettable, since some of their demands were reasonable and, if accepted, might have led to genuine improvement in international relations. But the memories of the war were far too vivid. France could not forget the devastation of her eastern provinces and Great Britain could not forget the horrors of the submarine campaign. The peace treaty that contained the League Covenant inevitably also contained clauses which made the League's success almost an impossibility.

Suggestions that there should be a plebiscite in Alsace-Lorraine, that Danzig, Memel, and Königsberg should become free ports, and that France should receive fixed quantities of coal instead of taking over the coal-mines of the Saar Basin were among those that were rejected. Immediate German admission to the League of Nations and the dis-

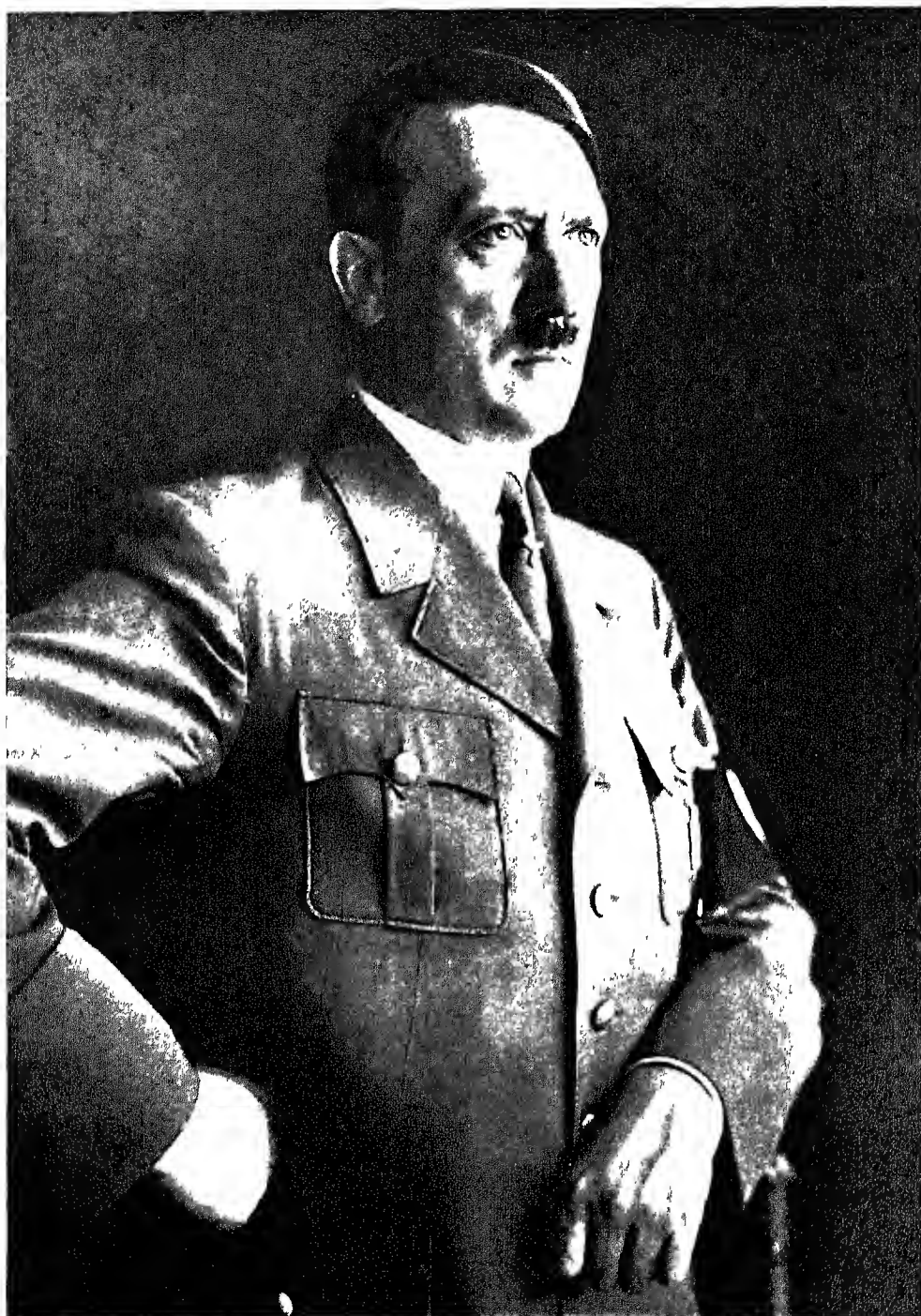
armament of the Allied Powers within two years were both refused. With the final draft of the treaty went the information that, unless it was accepted within a week, Allied troops would march into Germany. Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau refused to sign and gave up his position as head of the German delegation. But the National Assembly at Weimar accepted the treaty after a last vain attempt to get the "war guilt" clause cut out. The principal German signature was that of Herr Hermann Müller, who became Social-Democratic Chancellor in 1928.

There was no rejoicing over the whole business in Great Britain, where a war-weary public had become impatient with the efforts of politicians to build up a brave new world. In Germany there were only disillusion, despair, and bitterness against the men who had had the courage to accept the inevitable. Germany was defeated and had to bend the knee, but the Germans were too bewildered to analyse the causes of the defeat. They forgot that the treaties their Government had imposed upon Russia at Brest-Litovsk in 1917 and upon Roumania at Buftea in 1918 were much harsher than the notorious "Diktat" of Versailles.

"The Treaty of Versailles," wrote the very able Berlin correspondent of *The Times*, Norman Ebbutt, on April 10th, 1933, "could not have been better calculated to nourish the revival of the nationalistic Germany. With its tortuous divisions of territory, its dogmatic pronouncements on war responsibility, and its pious indication of an undefined general reduction of armaments, it provided every grievance the heart of a German nationalist could desire."

"In six months more," wrote Mr. J. L. Garvin in the *Observer* of October 8th, 1933, "peace would have been dictated at Berlin. The Germans would have been taught on their own territory the meaning of military invasion such as they had so widely inflicted on their neighbours. That sequel might have been the best for lasting peace. It would have taught the German people the full meaning of defeat. Never again would they have thought of war as the highest form of Aryan exercise. Impossible would have been that colossal falsehood of Nazi propaganda which is working as much evil as any other lie in the world to-day—that Germans are a superior race; that victory is their natural prerogative; that they really won the last war and are sure to win the next; that, last time, they were only 'robbed of their fruits' by Jews and sundry; and that next time they will glut themselves with 'fruits.'"

It should have been easy enough to win enthusiastic support for the new Republic, for never have I known a people so emptied of preconceived



HERR ADOLF HITLER

FÜHRER AND CHANCELLOR OF THE GERMAN REICH SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE ARMED FORCES  
WR 1]



ideas as the German people in the first two years after the war. They had never learnt to think for themselves. They had lived under a machine which taught them to click their heels and obey when spoken to by an officer or a bureaucrat. They had treated the Kaiser with greater deference than that accorded to any European monarch except the Tsar. And now the military machine had been forced to admit defeat and the Kaiser had fled in ignominious exile to Holland. Everything they had believed in had collapsed. The hardships they had accepted, infinitely greater than those of the Allies, seemed all to no purpose. Bewildered and starved, they would have followed any leadership towards any ideal. Humbly they went about their business and waited for someone to tell them what to do. The strain of the war continued after the Armistice and the first four months were more ruinous than any before. There was less food to eat and an even greater uncertainty as to the future than there had been in the last few months of resistance, hopeless though it had become.

There had been significant happenings between the negotiations for an armistice and the signing of the Peace Treaty. Early in October the General Staff had insisted that an armistice had become urgently desirable. The "November Revolution," which Herr Hitler subsequently blamed for all Germany's misfortunes, did not break out until a month later, and even then it started, not among civilians, but among sailors stationed at Kiel. The civilian morale had a lot to do with its collapse—and it is not surprising that from the early days of the present war, Dr. Goebbels should have sought to control and inspire the letters that were being sent to men at the front—but the Navy and Army had had enough of the terribly hard conditions in which they had to fight. On November 8th the Republic was proclaimed in Munich, and on November 9th the Revolution began in Berlin. It simmered for months.

While delegates from all over the world were discussing peace in Paris, there was civil war in Berlin. The Social-Democratic Party appointed a Council of People's Commissioners, who in turn appointed a Government which was predominantly *bourgeois*. The Independent Socialists formed their revolutionary Spartakist League, out of which grew the K.P.D., or Communist Party of Germany. The Social Democrats won the struggle, and presumably saved Germany from Bolshevism, but their victory ultimately caused their own defeat, since they turned for help to the remnants of the Army. The peace treaty, by enforcing disarmament on Germany, had thrown thousands of regular officers out of



work. They willingly allowed themselves to be organized by Herr Noske, Minister of National Defence, although he represented the hated Social-Democratic party. Under the command of a General von Luttwitz, they defeated the Spartakist League after several days of severe fighting. The two Communist leaders, Rosa Luxemburg and Dr. Karl Liebknecht, were brutally murdered. Assassination had become a recognized and respected method of removing foes from the political stage.

These disgruntled officers now awaited their next chance. Having been called in by the Social Democrats to destroy the Communists, they attempted in turn to destroy the Social Democrats. In March 1920, with Herr Wolfgang von Kapp and the notorious Marine Brigade, General von Luttwitz attacked Berlin, occupied the Government offices, and made himself Minister of National Defence in the place of Herr Noske, the man who had given him his power. The members of the legitimate Government fled to Stuttgart. They argued that they did so in order to avoid civil war while other methods were developed to repel the attack, but their action hardly increased their reputation for courage. The Kapp "Putsch" was a failure because the workers carried through a remarkable general strike—the most successful of its kind in recent history—which made life impossible for the would-be rulers in Berlin. Thirteen years later, when Herr Hitler began to destroy constitutional liberties, lack of agreement between Socialists and Communists, and the fear of the latter to act without instructions from Moscow, caused delay that was disastrous to them.

Foreign affairs could not be forgotten even in the throes of these civil disturbances. The French used them to justify the military occupation of Frankfurt, and month after month the arguments went on about reparations. The decision as to the amount that Germany must pay was an impossible one, for the experts had always to base their calculations on how much Germany ought to hand over—a political matter—and not on how much she could hand over—an economic one.

"With its weight, its uncertainty, the methods of its discussion and its enforcement," writes Sir Arthur Salter on the reparation problem, "the passions which it has expressed and aroused, it has been like an Old Man of the Sea on the back of a continent struggling to get to its feet, after four years of prostration and enfeeblement. It has been a principal obstacle to every attempt at recovery. . . . The cash results have not been proportionate to these consequences."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Recovery*, by Sir Arthur Salter (G. Bell & Sons).

During the Versailles Conference, politicians varied the figure between £5,000,000,000 and £50,000,000,000. They did not then dare to remind their people at home how absurd it was to expect a country which had carried on to the last gasp to pay not only the whole cost of repairing the devastated territories, but also various extras such as its enemies' pensions; nor did they realize the fairly obvious fact that Germany could ultimately only pay in goods which it would ruin us to receive. The French, in particular, had financed the war in the belief that Germany would be made to pay for it, and they were naturally reluctant to abandon their dreams.

As was inevitable, there were defaults in reparation payments, and the French, under M. Poincaré, committed their greatest blunder since the war—the occupation of the Ruhr in 1923. The blunder was understandable, since M. Clemenceau had only modified his demands at the Peace Conference on the Anglo-American promise of automatic assistance if Germany were at any time to repeat her invasion of France, and the British promise was allowed to lapse with the American when President Wilson failed to win approval of the Versailles Treaty in Congress. In such circumstances M. Poincaré allowed logic to defeat commonsense, and by ordering the occupation of the Ruhr he lost British sympathy for France and gave the incentive or the excuse for the German passive resistance which led to the period of inflation. The actual default which justified the occupation concerned the delivery of pit props by Germany, and Sir John Bradbury, British representative on the Reparations Committee, was reported to have summed up British opinion at the time in the declaration that there “had never been a greater misuse of timber since the wooden horse had gone into Troy.”

To what extent Germany deliberately debased her currency in order to avoid reparation payments is a matter which could be discussed for hours and without result, but every German conceived it to be his patriotic duty to support passive resistance in the Ruhr. To quote Sir Arthur Salter again:

“Every Minister of Finance, whether in France, in England, in Czecho-Slovakia, or later in Germany, who stabilized a fallen currency had to impose the most drastic sacrifices and to fight his way against strong opposing forces. No one of them could have carried out this policy if, while the sacrifices would indubitably fall on the country itself, the advantages would have largely gone to foreigners—and foreigners not loved. Since the stabili-

zation of the mark in gold would have been inevitably followed by increased demands for reparation payments, this was the case with Germany—and no further explanation is necessary.”<sup>1</sup>

Germany suffered during the inflation to which the passive-resistance policy led even more than she had suffered during the war. No pen can describe the chaotic conditions that followed the Government's loss of financial control. Wages that were paid in the evening had lost 50 per cent. of their value next morning. People bought seats at theatres with eggs or pats of butter. Shopkeepers, compelled by law to remain open a certain number of hours a day, prayed that there might be no customers to buy their remaining stock, since their goods had so much more value than the money they would receive for them. The immense and respectable middle class of Germany was driven in the course of a few weeks to suicide or to proletarian conditions.

Somewhere near £40,000,000 was paid to industrialists in the Ruhr to compensate them for their sufferings during the French occupation. By the time that Herr Stresemann formed a Government which put an end to this hopeless policy of passive resistance the German people were in utter despair. So desperate, indeed, that for the first time the name of Herr Adolf Hitler reached the front pages of the newspapers. By playing on the resentments of the starved middle classes and by hitching his wagon to General von Ludendorff's star, Herr Hitler won such a following that in October 1923 he made his first attempt to seize power. The revolt, for which he gave the signal by firing his revolver at the ceiling of the same Munich beer-hall where there occurred the sensational explosion in the early days of the present war, was a complete failure. His followers scattered at the first volley fired by the troops. But from this date he was the man to whom thousands of members of the lower middle class looked for salvation.

The wave of prosperity that flowed over Germany after the Dawes Plan had stabilized the mark on a new basis brought welcome relief, but no lasting recovery. Every financier was ready to lend money for the development of this great market. Municipalities could borrow as easily as Governments, and they built town halls, swimming-pools, places of recreation, and railway-stations that remain as remarkable monuments to a period to which the Nazis refer with such contempt, but which was in some ways the happiest the Germans have ever known.

But this prosperity, it must be insisted, came too soon after the

<sup>1</sup> *Recovery*, by Sir Arthur Salter (G Bell & Sons).



FIELD-MARSHAL GÖRING  
PRIME MINISTER OF PRUSSIA, MINISTER OF AIR  
AND REICH CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS



HERR JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP  
GERMAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS



DR. GOEBBELS  
GERMAN MINISTER OF PROPAGANDA



HERR RUDOLF HESS  
DEPUTY OF THE FUHRER OF THE NATIONAL  
SOCIALIST PARTY AND MINISTER

# THE RULERS OF GERMANY



appalling poverty of the defeat and the inflation to be lasting. The younger generation—the youths who marched into power with Herr Hitler at their head—recovered physically, but morally they became more unhealthy. They had for too long been prisoners in a dark cell to stand the sudden glare of the sunshine. The National-Socialist movement did not grow, but it developed. Its members became increasingly bitter against a society which attached too much importance to financial success (which they could not achieve), to the League of Nations (which they did not like), and to new movements in architecture and the other arts (which they did not understand). The Nazi movement has survived the criminal behaviour of many of its leaders because of that hard core of idealism to be found in those members of it who turned against the excesses and luxuries of the period between the floating of the Dawes Loan in 1924 and the beginning of the world slump in 1928.

During that period, according to the estimate made by Sir Arthur Salter, some £750,000,000 of foreign money poured into Germany. The bankers—many of them Jews—flourished, but the effects on the nation's economy were disastrous, since far too great an effort was made to expand the export trade to pay, not only reparations, but also the interest on these largely unnecessary debts. Also, Germany became the principal European victim of the disease of "rationalization," and with the introduction of each new piece of machinery she aggravated her unemployment problem. Consequently, when the crisis began in New York and the flow of money across the Atlantic dried up in a day, Germany was among the first and heaviest sufferers.

The resulting misery once more turned the limelight on the Versailles Treaty, for the territory which Germany had lost had contained some of their most valuable raw materials.

"In coal-mining, the area ceded had produced 15·7 per cent. of the value of the 1913 output; in iron ore, 48·2 per cent.; in the iron and steel industry, an average of about 19 per cent.; in zinc ore and smelting, 59 per cent.; in lead ore and smelting, 24 per cent.; in sulphur, 12 per cent.; and so on. In addition, 15·5 per cent. of the arable land area was ceded, and about 12 per cent. of all the livestock. . . . The Germany of 1920 was thus very different from the Germany of 1913. She had lost or ceded 13 per cent. of her 1913 population; 13 per cent. of her European territory, all her colonies, and about 15 per cent. of her total productive capacity."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Recovery of Germany*, by J. W. Angell. (These figures include the Saar Basin.)  
WR. I—2

The Social Democrats who had played the most important part in German politics since the war had to bear the brunt of this new storm. To them fell the unpleasant task of explaining to the German workers that, in order to live up to the country's foreign obligations, trade unionists must agree to go hungry again. The same Social Democrats had taken the lead in developing international co-operation. It was with their support that Herr Stresemann had led the German delegation into the League of Nations and had drawn up with M. Briand and Mr. Chamberlain (and with the invaluable help of Lord D'Abernon, the British Ambassador in Berlin) the Treaty of Locarno, which was to be a bridge instead of a barrier between the people of Germany and France. Now, with every country driven towards economic nationalism and tempted to blame the slump on everyone else, this grand and promising structure of international peace began to crack and crumble. With growing unemployment at home the British and the French had little time to worry about the political effects of growing unemployment in Germany.

The tragedy was that the policy of international co-operation had come so near to success. The League of Nations, despite the unfortunate shackles that linked it to the Versailles Treaty, had settled quite a number of minor international disputes, including one in which a Greek army had advanced a dozen miles across the frontier into Bulgaria and yet was induced by the League Council to withdraw within a few hours and to pay an indemnity for the damage that it had done. In every country the sentimentalists were joined by an increasing number of hard-headed realists in supporting this international machinery with its conferences to tackle, not only political problems, but all the economic and social problems that cause international friction.

The negotiations which preceded Germany's admission to the League were difficult. The League's Council had been mixed up in the decision which gave a large part of Upper Silesia to Poland, and it had appointed the members of the Governing Commission which was to rule over the Saar Basin until the plebiscite in 1935. It had appointed the High Commissioner in Danzig, which every German looked upon as a purely German city. In this and other ways—and through no fault of its own—it had many enemies in Germany, and their number was greatly increased by a foolish last-minute attempt to "pack" the League Council against Germany, by adding several allies of France to the number of its permanent members. Germany was coming in as a Great Power—and the alloca-

tion of a permanent seat on the Council was an outward sign of greatness—or not at all, and her status would have been humiliatingly reduced had Poland, Spain, and Brazil, as was proposed, been promoted. But despite these handicaps Herr Stresemann persisted in his intention to bring Germany back into Europe, and in September 1926 came that memorable day when his country became a member of the League—the greatest day, not of his career alone, but also of that of M. Aristide Briand.

The words then spoken by the Foreign Minister of France in that deep, magnificent, and memorable voice are words which read sadly to-day. But they deserve quotation since they place on record the high hopes of 1926.

“Those who indulge in irony and detraction at the expense of the League of Nations,” he said, “who daily cast doubt upon its soundness, and time after time proclaim that it is doomed to perish, what will they think if they are present at this meeting? . . .

“Peace for Germany and for France. That means that we have done with the long series of terrible and bloody conflicts which have stained the pages of history. We have done with the black veils of mourning for sufferings that can never be appeased, done with war, done with brutal and bloody methods of settling our disputes. True, differences between us still exist, but henceforth it will be for the judge to declare the law. Just as individual citizens take their difficulties to be settled by a magistrate, so shall we bring ours to be settled by specific procedure. Away with rifles, machine-guns, cannon! Make room for conciliation, arbitration, peace!

“Countries do not go down to history as great solely through the heroism of their sons on the battlefields or the victories that they gain there. It is a far finer tribute to their greatness if, faced with difficulties, in the midst of circumstances in which anger all but drowns the voice of reason, they can stand firm, be patient, and appeal to right to safeguard their just interests.

“Gentlemen of the German delegation, our nations need give no further proof of their strength or of their heroism. Both nations have shown their prowess on the battlefield, and both have reaped an ample harvest of military glory. Henceforth they may seek laurels in other fields.

“Henceforth our road is to be one of peace and progress. We shall win real greatness for our countries if we induce them to lay aside their pride, if we persuade them to sacrifice certain of their own desires in the service of world peace. This sacrifice will not diminish, it will increase, their prestige.”

But the economic difficulties referred to above were soon to destroy



these hopes. M. Briand and Herr Stresemann, worn out by the criticisms of their enemies at home, lost influence and power. In May 1924 Herr Hitler's party had won thirty-two seats in the Reichstag. In May 1928 the number had fallen to twelve, but in September 1930 it increased to one hundred and seven. The number of Nazi voters, in other words, varied in direct ratio to the number of empty stomachs in Germany, and as the crisis deepened, the armies of Brownshirts carrying out their semi-military parades, despite the Versailles restrictions, became ominous and ubiquitous. In July 1932 nearly 14,000,000 electors—over 37 per cent. of the electorate—voted for Herr Hitler and gave him 230 seats in the Reichstag. This was the highest figure he ever achieved by legal methods, and even so the word "legal" must be used with reservations, since already he was using intimidation as one of his most important political weapons. The last free elections to be held were in the following November, and in that short period he dropped 2,000,000 votes, partly because the big industrialists who had put money into the Nazi coffers ceased to do so when their old friend and ally, Herr von Papen, became Chancellor of the Government, and partly because so many elections had left the Nazis so badly in debt. When Herr Hitler finally became Chancellor on January 30th, 1933, he did so as the result of a strange piece of intrigue and treachery and at a time when millions of Germans believed that the Nazi danger was diminishing.

The necessity for keeping up exports, to which reference has already been made, ruined the chances of the Catholic leader, Dr. Brüning, who took office in April 1930, when the Social Democrats could no longer carry out a policy based upon constant reduction in the workers' standard of living. Dr. Brüning himself was compelled to reduce the cost of production almost to dumping levels, and this, of course, involved a catastrophic reduction in wages and in the purchasing power at home. It has been reckoned that at one time 85 per cent. of Germany's six million unemployed were in the Nazi Party and they, naturally enough, listened to Herr Hitler when he damned the policy of fulfilment, reminded them that their Socialist leaders were parties to it, and claimed that it had not achieved sufficient successes in the international field. The third Rhineland zone, it is true, had been handed back to Germany five years before the Allies were compelled by treaty to evacuate it, but the German moderates had not made the most of this victory. In this, as in almost every case of concession, the Allied gesture had been made too late, so that it had appeared to be one of weakness rather than of generosity.



THE RT HON NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, V DALADIER HERR HITLER, AND SIGNOR MUSSOLINI  
MUNICH, SEPTEMBER 1938



Dr. Brüning, in fact, could not depend upon Parliament to back up his policy of fulfilment, and he unconsciously prepared the way for Herr Hitler's dictatorship by his use of Article 48 of the Constitution, which gave the President and his Chancellor the right to govern by decree in periods of danger. In his effort to cut down expenditure he came into conflict with the East Prussian Junkers, whose estates, instead of being divided among land-hungry peasants, had been helped with Government subsidies and were nevertheless bankrupt. The behaviour of these big and reactionary landowners had become a national scandal, but the old President von Hindenburg, who had been given an East Prussian estate by a grateful nation, was not ready to support Government action against his neighbouring landowners. He allowed first Dr. Brüning and then General von Schleicher to resign the Chancellorship. Herr von Papen, who had been the victim of the most bitter Nazi attacks in the election of November 1932, plotted with various rich industrialists of the Ruhr—and notably with Herr von Thyssen, who fled to Switzerland as a refugee early in the present war—in order to make Herr Hitler Chancellor of the German Reich and himself the Vice-Chancellor. On January 30th, 1933, President von Hindenburg summoned these unexpected allies, Herr Hitler, Herr von Papen, and Dr. Hugenberg, the millionaire newspaper owner, and authorized Herr Hitler, his own opponent at the Presidential elections only a few months earlier, to form the new German Government. That evening thousands upon thousands of enthusiastic Nazis marched up and down the Wilhelmstrasse to salute their leader, while the aged President of the Republic and leader of the German armies in the War of 1914-18 stood almost unnoticed at a neighbouring window.

How had this insignificant and ranting man become so dominating and important a personality? He had started off in life with no special advantages—his father was a humble Customs Inspector on the Austro-German border, and the house at Braunau in which Adolf Hitler was born is one of those large, high-roofed peasant houses that are so common in Austria or Southern Germany. It stands next to the barracks in which Dr. Dollfuss served as a subaltern, long before he became Chancellor of Austria and the victim of Herr Hitler's followers. Young Adolf refused to follow in his father's footsteps. He had ambitions to become an artist, and as a young man he tramped to Vienna in the hope of obtaining a scholarship. His sketches were fairly good, but not good enough, and he was advised instead to study architecture. Having no

money to pay for his training, he was reduced to mixing mortar and carrying bricks instead of designing the houses of which they were built. Sometimes he had no work at all, and tramped the streets with an empty stomach and a growing bitterness against the Jews, the Czechs, and all the other peoples that made up the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His misery turned him towards Socialism, but his resentment that these peoples did not recognize the superiority of his own German race turned him towards Nationalism. The fact that together they easily outnumbered the Germans made him an opponent of democracy.

In 1912 he went to Munich and lived, his biographers know not how, until the war broke out—an event which, according to his own account, he greeted with prayers of thanksgiving. He volunteered for service in a Bavarian regiment, for already he was more in sympathy with Germany than with Austria. He served throughout the war and yet was only a lance-corporal at the end of it. How he won his Iron Cross, if indeed he really won it at all, is a matter for speculation. The Armistice found him in hospital suffering from gas poisoning. Anxious to form a party of his own, he became the seventh member of a German Workers' Party whose meeting he attended on the orders of German officers anxious to find out what the German workers were thinking and saying. He soon became its secretary, and then its undisputed leader. By October 1923 he had become so important that, as already explained, he tried to start a revolution in a Munich beer cellar. It failed miserably with the first volleys from troops who were loyal to the Republic. Captain Goering (as he then was) was badly wounded, but escaped over the mountains; Herr Hitler was arrested, served a few months in a fortress at Landsberg, and wrote the first draft of that uneven and famous book, *Mein Kampf*.

His rise to power was due less to his own merits than to his country's miseries. It cannot be too often emphasized that the present Führer of Germany has achieved success by harping on the prejudices and resentments of the little man, and it is for that reason that attention has been called to the opportunities which the Versailles Treaty gave him for piling upon the shoulders of the leaders of German Social Democracy and of the Allied Powers the blame for everything that went wrong in Germany. The fact that Herr Hitler himself had tramped the streets in search of work gave him a hold over the hungry unemployed which no statesman with a less uncomfortable past could hope to rival.

On February 27th, 1933, a few weeks after Herr Hitler had become Chancellor, the Reichstag fire gave him the excuse for putting in concen-



HERR HIMMLER  
CHIEF OF THE GESTAPO



HERR FOERSTER  
FUHRER OF DANZIG



HERR HENLEIN  
COMMISSIONER FOR CEDED TERRITORY



THE LATE DR. BRUNING

FOUR GERMAN STATESMEN



tration camps or prison cells almost all the Socialists and Communists who had been in active opposition to him. The alleged documents which were supposed to implicate them and which were to be published were never published, since they never existed. The famous Reichstag Fire trial did nothing to lessen international suspicion that the Nazis themselves were responsible for it. One may dislike George Dimitrov for his activities as secretary of the Communist International in Moscow, but nobody who saw him during the trial, at which he was one of the most important accused, could fail to pay tribute to his magnificent courage. But the ordinary German, with the newspapers, the radio, and the cinema asserting Communist guilt day after day, ended by believing the assertions. As soon as this enemy of the Nazi movement had been safely put out of the way, the Jews were dragged to the front of the stage to be mocked, tortured, and accused of causing Germany's miseries. When they had been so ruthlessly crushed that even the stupidest German could no longer look upon them as a danger, Herr Hitler turned his attention to international affairs.

In this field he was at first very lucky, for he was able, by tearing up one after the other the less reputable articles of the Versailles Treaty, to unite public opinion behind him in Germany and to divide it elsewhere. On October 14th, 1933, by way of reply to a speech by Sir John Simon, he ordered his delegates to withdraw from the Disarmament Conference and from the League of Nations, since his demand for immediate military equality with the other Powers had been countered by an Anglo-French proposal to bring this equality about after a delay so considerable that millions of Englishmen sympathized rather with Herr Hitler than with Sir John Simon, the British Foreign Secretary. Nevertheless, the decision marked the end of that period of fulfilment inaugurated by Herr Stresemann ten years earlier.

Germany unfortunately had never fully appreciated the potentialities of the League, since her admission had come about so much later than that of the other great Powers. Her representatives on the Secretariat failed to develop that feeling of international solidarity generally referred to as "the Geneva atmosphere" which had allowed officials of nearly fifty different nationalities to co-operate almost as effectively as did the officials of one nationality in a national civil service. It was difficult, without an unjustifiable increase in the League's budget or a series of dismissals of officials of other nationalities, at once to find posts for as many Germans as German national pride demanded. The German



Under-Secretary General was placed in charge of social and intellectual co-operation instead of work directly connected with the great political issues of the day. Also there was mutual suspicion between the old hands and the new arrivals, so that, despite the enthusiasm aroused when Herr Stresemann had made his first speech from the Assembly Tribune, the German influence on League affairs had been less than was to be either expected or desired. Consequently, Herr Hitler's withdrawal from Geneva was a popular gesture in Germany, and it enabled Dr. Goebbels, who had marched into the Assembly Hall as the leader of the German delegation, to revive through his propaganda machine all the previous suspicions of the League as an instrument in the hands of the Allies to keep Germany down.

From that October day the prospects of peace diminished, although in January 1934 Herr Hitler signed a ten-year non-aggression pact with Poland, the country which had viewed his progress to power with the greatest alarm. If he was prepared to accept the existence of the Polish "Corridor" dividing East Prussia from the rest of the Reich, we told ourselves, he might possibly become a good European after all. But the hopes that, having attained power, he would "settle down" were soon to be destroyed by two events—the great Purge of June 30th and the murder of Dr. Dollfuss. On June 30th, 1934, Captain Roehm, General von Schleicher and his wife, Herr Gregor Strasser, and many of Herr Hitler's former friends or opponents were assassinated. Captain Roehm was a notorious homosexual, but so were other important members of the Party. He was one of Herr Hitler's closest associates and the supreme commander of the S.A. (Sturm Abteilungen), or Brown Shirts. But he wanted to incorporate these Brown Shirts in the German Reichswehr, and the Generals who opposed him were able to win the Führer's support. The excuses for the assassinations were as feeble as those put forward for the arrest of Communists and Socialists after the Reichstag Fire, but the event marked Herr Hitler's first step away from the Socialistic clauses of his original Party programme towards an understanding with the commanding generals of the Army.

The murder of the Austrian Chancellor, on July 25th, 1934, stoutly denied by the Nazis at the time, but glorified after Austria had been annexed and the murderers were treated as national heroes, was an event which profoundly shocked the world. Dr. Dollfuss was no great democrat, and his shelling of the workers' dwellings in Vienna—then the best of their kind in Europe—in February of the same year had left a large blot

on the page of Austrian history. But his diminutive size, his great personal courage, and his determination to maintain Austrian independence, had won him sympathy all over the world. The brutal circumstances of his death—he was allowed to bleed to death without attention from priest or doctor—should have convinced all Governments that Germany had come under the rule of desperate gangsters. The chief gangster seized the occasion of President Hindenburg's death a few days later to proclaim himself "Führer and Chancellor," and a not very convincing plebiscite supported his claim in a 93 per cent. poll. The little Austrian tramp, who only became a German citizen in 1932 when he was appointed Professor of Pedagogics at Brunswick Technical College, had become the supreme ruler over the great German nation.

The Saar plebiscite held at the beginning of 1935 might have led to a better understanding, since it flattered Herr Hitler by the overwhelming majority of votes in favour of a return of the territory to Germany instead of remaining under the control of the League of Nations, and it removed an undoubted source of friction between Germany and France. But within a few weeks Herr Hitler denounced the disarmament clauses of the Versailles Treaty and introduced conscription.

At the time of the Dollfuss murder Signor Mussolini had marched troops up to the Brenner Pass and had frightened Herr Hitler out of an attempt to seize Austria with the help of an "Austrian Legion" he had organized on German soil. Again Italy played a leading part in condemning Germany for this step towards rearmament. But Signor Mussolini was already becoming involved in his plans to invade Abyssinia, and by the time the invasion and the League's reply to it in the form of sanctions were over, Herr Hitler had become the dominating factor in Europe. So much so, that when the annexation of Austria finally took place in February 1938, Signor Mussolini telegraphed his congratulations to Herr Hitler on taking a step which placed Italy in greater danger of a German attack than she had been in before the War of 1914. Italian intervention in that war had aimed principally at weakening the threat from Austria-Hungary. The weak post-war Austria presented no danger at all to the Italians. But the presence of Nazi troops on the Brenner frontier, so near the rich shores of the Mediterranean, compelled Signor Mussolini entirely to reverse his whole European policy. He could no longer offend Herr Hitler, and his country came so much under German domination that Italians would remark bitterly that "things used to be much better when we were ruled by Mussolini."

The turning-point in Herr Hitler's foreign political career was his denunciation in March 1936 of the Treaty of Locarno and his militarization of the fifty-kilometre zone along his western frontier, which, according to the Versailles Treaty, was to be kept clear for all time of soldiers and fortifications. It was the turning-point because the Treaty of Locarno was in no way a dictated treaty as the Treaty of Versailles had been. And Herr Hitler himself had underlined the difference after he became Chancellor. He had specifically asserted his acceptance of the Locarno Treaty. The French talked of mobilization. Mr. Anthony Eden was prepared to back them up, since he stated in the House of Commons that he would not be the first British Foreign Secretary to go back on his word. But once again Herr Hitler had played his cards well. The Rhinelanders had watched with fear on their faces while their own German troops marched into their towns because they were convinced that this would be the signal for a French attack. The Reichswehr generals were bitterly opposed to the taking of such risks. But in Great Britain and other countries there were many who excused the Nazi action with the argument that it was absurd to believe that a great people like the Germans could accept in perpetuity the demilitarization of their frontier territory while the French, on the other side of the Rhine, were building the Maginot Line. After anxious meetings in London, Germany was reproached and Great Britain and France were brought more closely together. But no other action was taken, for the British Government was not willing to undertake economic or other sanctions against Germany. Once again Herr Hitler had succeeded in uniting his own people and in dividing people elsewhere.

There remained practically no clauses in the Versailles Treaty, except those dealing with Colonies, which still placed Germany on a different footing from the victor Powers. And those of us who had realized in interviews with him that his strength had been built up and maintained by the encouragement of hatred wondered what next Herr Hitler would do to convince his people that he was their sole protector against the plottings of a malevolent world. We had not to wait for long. In July 1936 General Franco, as recorded in a subsequent chapter in this volume, started a revolution against the Spanish Republican Government, and the German Führer developed an entirely new technique of warfare. While he had confined his activities to the destruction of the Versailles "Diktat" and to the union of the German peoples, one could find certain excuses for him, much though one might be revolted



HERR HITLER AND HERR GOLRING WITH PRESIDENT HINDENBURG WHEN THE LATTER WAS PRESENTED WITH AN ESTATE AT TANNENBERG, PRUSSIA, IN AUGUST 1933



by the racial theories he put forward to justify his statements about the purity and superiority of the German race. But in Spain there were virtually no Germans except those troops that he sent there, and there was good evidence that he had sent them before the Russians had begun to send "volunteers" to the Republican side. The present writer, in a visit to Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, and other important cities in early October 1936, only met one Russian, namely the Soviet Ambassador, but already German and Italian aeroplanes were giving great assistance to General Franco.

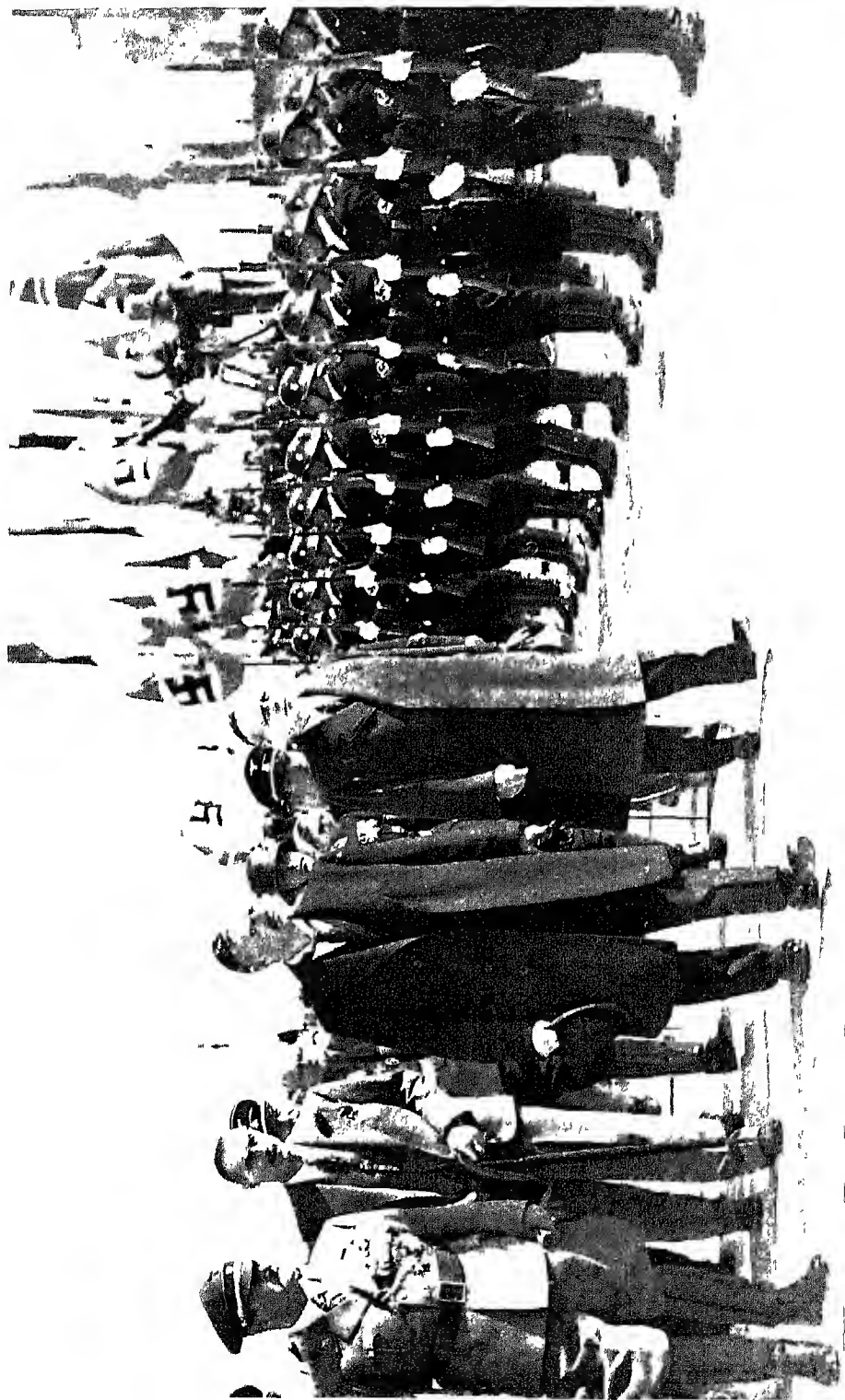
Throughout the miserable and hypocritical meetings of the Non-Intervention Committee, however, Herr Hitler's ambassador maintained in London that Germany had no desire to be involved. There was evidence that regular German soldiers, and especially men from the Air Force and various technical services, were being recruited for service in Spain, and when finally the civil war came to an end these German "volunteers" were given an official welcome home. But the British and French Governments, anxious to offend neither Herr Hitler nor Signor Mussolini, accepted any excuses which saved them from facing up to the consequences of the fact that German and Italian troops were fighting in Spain, not for the defence of the Spanish people, but in order to obtain points of vantage in the event of a war between Germany and Italy, on the one side, and Great Britain and France, on the other. This hesitation, based partly upon their own unreadiness to go to war, encouraged Herr von Ribbentrop first as ambassador in London, and later as Minister of Foreign Affairs in Berlin, to assure Herr Hitler that the democracies no longer had it in them to fight. If one man more than any other carries the responsibility for the present war upon his shoulders, it is Herr von Ribbentrop, who was so ready while he was at the Embassy in London to listen only to Englishmen who would talk to him of British decadence and Nazi greatness. Members of the German diplomatic service who ventured to express different views were squeezed out of all positions of importance, and this ambitious and snobbish champagne merchant was allowed by Herr Hitler to build up a kind of diplomatic service of his own.

The spring of 1938 brought fresh warnings that the leaders of Germany preferred the use of force to any other argument. Ever since his meeting in July 1936 with Dr. von Schuschnigg, the Austrian Chancellor, who had succeeded Dr. Dollfuss, Herr Hitler had been lavish with reassurances of his goodwill towards Austria. Nevertheless, Nazi plotting had continued,

and when Herr Hitler ordered the Austrian Chancellor to come to see him at Berchtesgaden in February 1938, the latter was able to bring with him documentary evidence of plans for an impending revolution. The German Führer did not even trouble to deny their authenticity. Instead, in his interview, in which menaces were the only arguments, he imposed conditions which would have wiped out Austria's last hopes of independence.

Dr. Schuschnigg made a final appeal to Signor Mussolini, but his appeal was rejected. He therefore took his boldest step and announced that a plebiscite was to be held in which the Austrian people were to declare for or against union with Herr Hitler's Germany. This presented a risk to Herr Hitler's prestige which he could not afford to run, for there might have been a large Austrian majority against union with the Nazis, although shortly after the Armistice in 1918 every political party in Austria had supported a plea to the Allies that their country and Germany should be allowed to become one. Therefore on March 11th, 1939, despite all the promises that Austrian independence would be respected, Herr Hitler's troops crossed the frontier, Chancellor Schuschnigg was arrested, and has ever since been kept as an unhappy prisoner in Vienna, and independent Austria was replaced on the maps of Europe by a German province known as the Ostmark. Governments of the Western Powers expressed sympathy with the Austrians and indignation against the Nazis, but took no action beyond facilitating the escape of a few thousand unhappy refugees.

Czecho-Slovakia was the next obvious victim. The Czechs had made considerable efforts to conciliate their large Sudeten German minority in whose existence Herr Hitler showed no interest until they became politically useful to him. From the early days of the Republic they had included German ministers in their Government. But the world slump had hit the Sudeten German workers very badly and had given a large following to the relatively mild local Hitler, Herr Conrad Henlein. Besides, with the conquest of Austria, Czecho-Slovakia was surrounded on three sides, and she must not be given time in which to develop along her Austrian frontier fortifications anything like so formidable as those along her thousand-year-old frontier with Germany. But France and Russia had defensive alliances with Czecho-Slovakia, and the British Government was being forced to realize that each new concession to Hitler only made war more nearly inevitable. Mr. Chamberlain had therefore declared that Great Britain could hardly keep out of a European struggle in which France was involved.



SIR NEVILLE HENDERSON THE RT HON NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN HERR VON RIBBENTROP  
MUNICH AERODROME, 1938





Nevertheless, Herr Hitler was once again confident that he could settle the Czech problem without a war. After a Press campaign of hatred against the Czechs which then had no parallel in history his intentions became so clear that on September 14th the British Prime Minister offered to fly over to Germany in a last effort to negotiate a peaceful settlement. At his famous mountain chalet above Berchtesgaden Herr Hitler formulated far-reaching demands which Mr. Chamberlain agreed to pass on to Prague. On British and French advice these demands were conceded by the Czechs, but when, a week later, Mr. Chamberlain announced this welcome news to the German Chancellor at Godesberg, he was met with an abrupt declaration that the terms had been greatly increased. After a memorable day during which he stayed in his hotel on one side of the Rhine and the Führer stayed in his on the other, there was a final meeting, at which Mr. Chamberlain agreed to forward the latest demands to Prague, but not to recommend that the Czechs should accept them. The Czechs, in fact, bluntly rejected them, and war seemed inevitable. An outward sign of the crisis was the series of trenches dug across the pleasant swards of the London parks.

On September 29th Mr. Chamberlain made his third and final visit to Herr Hitler. Signor Mussolini and M. Daladier also arrived at Munich. After a very long meeting in the Führerhaus, one of the great new buildings put up since Herr Hitler had reached a situation which allowed him to follow his most extravagant architectural dreams, a communiqué was issued which was in reality a death sentence on Czecho-Slovakia. The Czech delegates were not consulted and the terms imposed upon their country were much harsher even than those which been submitted to Mr. Chamberlain at Berchtesgaden. War had once again been avoided.

Or rather, postponed, for few people could take seriously the document the Prime Minister brought home with him. Despite the promise it contained that Great Britain and Germany would consult whenever any further problem arose between them, it had by now become patent to almost everybody that Herr Hitler and Herr von Ribbentrop wanted nothing less than the domination of Europe and believed that they could achieve it without active protest from Britain. Warning after warning had been pushed aside with contempt. And in March of 1939, on the usual absurd and lying excuses, German troops marched into Prague as a year previously they had marched into Vienna. A people that in 1938 had been well armed and determined to defend its independence no longer had guns or fortification or allies. One more country disappeared

from the map. And Herr Hitler, despite his assurances that he wanted to rule only over Germans, brought within his frontier several millions of Slavs.

The last act in the tragedy is dealt with elsewhere in this volume. The Poles, under the control of Colonel Beck, a Foreign Minister whose obsequiousness in the presence of Herr Hitler had already aroused great distrust, had not only failed to help the Czechs in September 1938: they had themselves hurried in to seize a section of Czecho-Slovak territory. A year later came their turn. Despite the German-Polish treaty of friendship, of which Herr Hitler had so loudly boasted, the same lies that had been used to work up the German people against the Austrians and the Czechs were used against Poland. Shortly after the disappearance of Czecho-Slovakia, the British Government had supplemented the Franco-Polish alliance by a guarantee to come to Poland's help if she were attacked. Once again Herr Hitler believed he could avoid a major war. But on this occasion he made his greatest mistake. On September 1st, and without any declaration of war, the German armies marched across the Polish border, and on Sunday, September 3rd, the Prime Minister announced to the House of Commons, whose members had just heard the first air-raid warnings, the news that Great Britain had declared war on Germany.

## CHAPTER 2

### FROM WAR TO WAR : 1918-1939

BY W. GORDON WILLIAMS

THE War of 1939 cannot be understood without considering the consequences of the previous Great War. Whether all those consequences were inevitable, or to what degree the more disastrous of them might have been avoided, must remain a question for debate among later historians. All we can do while reviewing the dramatic events of the two troubled decades that link the two greatest wars in human history is to note the more important factors that produced changes for better or for worse in the world, and especially in Europe, the centre of the main disturbance.

In some important respects the War of 1939 can be seen as a resumption of the war which broke out in 1914. It began again between essentially the same antagonists, and the immediate cause of the outbreak was again the resistance of the peacefully inclined Western Powers to the ambitions of Germany, who had become the greatest military Power in the world by deliberately preparing herself in peacetime for another great war.

The situation in 1914 did, however, differ in many ways from that of 1939, but to put first things first it must be recognized that whoever was most to blame for the recurrence of the situation that made a conflict inevitable, there is only one primary answer to the question "What was the fight about?"

Germany was regarded as a menace by the rich and muddled democracies of Britain and France, and she represented herself as a claimant to a larger share of the world's resources. The fact that she was actually prospering in 1914, and might have entered an era of prosperity by 1939 but for her uneconomic armament programmes and her disturbances of international security, should not obscure the fundamental truth that Germany regarded the French and British Empires ultimately as enemies to be despoiled. Her ambition was the hegemony of Europe as the corner-stone of world power. Britain's policy had long been to counteract the menace of any predominant Power in Europe by supporting other European Powers threatened by her. France, with bitter memories of

the War of 1870, regarded herself as perpetually in danger from the German rivalry, and, in accordance with her historic policy, relied on strong military alliances. Thus it was that in 1914 she was in firm alliance with Tsarist Russia, while Great Britain, as keenly conscious of German rivalry as was France, and even beginning to feel herself equally threatened by German naval and trade expansion, cultivated an Entente which made her the apex of the triangle with France and Russia at the base.

Russia, corrupt within and demoralized, collapsed into revolution before the end of the war and made an ignominious peace with a Germany that still looked as if she might win, in spite of increasing economic difficulties and the growing preponderance of the Allied resources reinforced by those of the United States. Russia's losses had been very heavy, though only vaguely ascertained, owing to the chaotic internal conditions which quickly supervened after the peace. The losses of the other combatants in men alone, to say nothing of material, suggest the enormous scale of the war and remind us how tremendous must have been the problem of reconstruction, especially when account is taken of the bitter resentments that such a holocaust left behind. The nearest round figures are given here :

WITH THE ALLIES			
British Empire	. . .	Dead, 1,000,000	Wounded, 2,500,000
France	. . .	Dead, 1,400,000	Wounded, 1,500,000
Italy	. . .	Dead, 460,000	Wounded, 947,000
Serbia	. . .	Dead, 127,000	Wounded, 133,000
U.S.A.	. . .	Dead, 115,000	Wounded, 205,000
Belgium	. . .	Dead, 38,000	Wounded, 45,000
Portugal	. . .	Dead, 7,000	Wounded, 14,000
AGAINST THE ALLIES			
Germany	. . .	Dead, 2,051,000	Wounded, 4,200,000
Austria-Hungary	. . .	Dead, 1,200,000	Wounded, 3,600,000
Bulgaria	. . .	Dead, 101,000	Wounded, 153,000
Turkey	. . .	Dead, 300,000	Wounded, 570,000

Like Russia's, Roumania's losses on the side of the Allies were not properly recorded, though a figure of about 336,000 dead was established.

Again, the colossal economic losses are reflected in the figures of British mercantile shipping losses, which amounted to a total tonnage of over 7,800,000. Of this total, submarines accounted for nearly 7,000,000 tons.

As Sir Valentine Chirol (*Fifty Years in a Changing World*, 1927) wrote :

"The Great War was an ordeal such as our civilization had never before passed through. It was a war not merely of organized armies and fleets, but of whole nations straining every nerve

in a pitiless struggle for existence ; it was a war in which all the achievements of modern science, applied for the nonce to unprecedented methods of destruction, played no less a part than human fortitude and disciplined endurance ; it was a war in which for a time all social differences and distinctions were levelled by death or the peril of death on an endless field of battle by land and by sea ; it was a war that sent a great seismic wave rolling round and round the earth. The world that emerged from it was not, alas, ' a world fit for heroes to live in,' but a world rudely awakened to the consciousness, however vague, that there was something fundamentally wrong with a civilization which had borne such an appalling harvest of human suffering and widespread ruin. It is an overwrought and disjointed world in perhaps a deeper travail than ever before. There hangs over the future a heavy cloud of crude materialism. We have entered into an age of sharper contrasts and of far more acute tension and conflict than were ever dreamt of in the Mid-Victorian era to which I belong."

This realistic and gloomy view of the disaster from which Europe had to recover after the Armistice did not become general until nearly the end of the first of the two decades between the two great wars. But it was shared by many enlightened people, who saw dire possibilities in the plans being mooted by the Allies at the end of 1918. In France, where fear of a German recovery was greatest, and where a good deal of criticism maintained that the Armistice had come too soon, because the victorious troops should have marched into Berlin, the unpopular view was expressed by Romain Rolland (*Le Populaire*, December 21st, 1918) that much in the proposals for territorial readjustments (which a little later came to be called " the Balkanization of Europe ") meant another disaster : " Without a powerful counter-stroke I see on the horizon a century of hatred, of new wars of revenge, and the destruction of European civilization." This was the extreme view, and a reaction primarily against the dominant policy of France to revive her system of security by alliances, a policy which she was the first to appreciate would be assisted by the well-intentioned plans for liberating oppressed nationalities in Europe. It should also be noted that the gloomier prophecies of the intelligentsia, while being ultimately justified, were not based entirely on the right premises ; they ignored important factors, especially economic developments that were to take place, which held great possibilities of a stabilized and prosperous peace. It is probably in the failure of the statesmen and politicians of the peoples concerned to make due allowances to both the political and to the economic sides of the problems that had to be solved

which caused the gradual demoralization of Europe and the rise of totalitarian power politics.

Before the Armistice of November 1918 and the subsequent formation of the League of Nations with its excellently conceived "Covenant," a certain speech that has become famous was made by the U.S.A.'s President Wilson. His Address to Congress on January 8th, 1918, was made with the connivance of British and French statesmen, who were anxious to counter the revolutionary propaganda and the destructive criticism of their war policy that was being given to the world by the Russian Bolsheviks. Whether the British and French politicians were as sincere as Wilson in the statement of idealistic and sane war aims may probably be doubted, as they were more closely bound to older policies and interests. But President Wilson's speech included the famous "Fourteen Points" which were to be observed in future settlements, and these covered the avowed war aims of the Allies. The very first one was obviously an answer to—it might also be regarded as an admission of the truth of—certain Bolshevik accusations. Very briefly condensed, the Fourteen Points were as follows :

1. Covenants of peace were to be openly drawn up and thereafter there should be no more secret international understandings. All diplomatic procedure to be frank and public.

2. Absolute freedom of navigation on the high seas, in peace and in war, except when international action to enforce a covenant required interference.

3. Removal of economic barriers, and equal trading conditions among the nations consenting to the peace and associated to maintain it.

4. Guarantees for reduction of national armaments to a minimum consistent with domestic safety.

5. A free, open-minded, impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based on strict observance of the interests of the populations concerned.

6. Evacuation of all Russian territory, and the freest co-operation with her by the other nations to obtain for her the unhampered determination of her own political development and national policy. She should be welcomed into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing and given every assistance that she might need and herself desire. "The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their goodwill, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy."

7. Evacuation and full restoration of Belgium. "Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is for ever impaired."

8. All French territory to be freed, "and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which had unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure."

9. Readjustment of Italian frontiers along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

10. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, "whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded, and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development."

11. Roumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated. Serbia should have free access to the sea. Relations between the Balkan States to be determined by friendly counsel on lines of allegiance and nationality, with an international guarantee of the economic independence and territorial integrity of each State.

12. The Turkish portion of the Ottoman Empire to be assured a secure sovereignty. Security for autonomous development of the other nationalities under Turkish rule. Dardanelles to be permanently open for ships of all nations under international guarantee.

13. An independent Polish State to be erected, including the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations. This State should be assured a free and secure access to the sea. Its political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.

14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small States alike.

Here was the most detailed and explicit statement of aims that any of the Allies had made, and it became the basis of the negotiations resulting in the Treaty of Versailles, and in the formation of the League of Nations. Much as the Fourteen Points might be criticized, and severe though the condemnation of the Treaty of Versailles has been, in the democracies as well as in the vanquished nations, the former only need to be set out and re-read for their immense possibilities of good to be realized, while the terms of the Treaty itself were by no means entirely unjust or even unnecessary.

The purely destructive critics of the Treaty tended to forget or ignore



the political difficulties of the situation after 1918, as well as the avowed intentions of Germany had she been victorious. There was a flourishing pan-German cult before 1914; its ideal of a German-controlled State, called "Mittel-Europa," extending from the Baltic down to the Adriatic, Mediterranean, and Black Seas, and including a large slice of Western Russia, did not differ much from the grandiose programme that was later incautiously described by Herr Hitler in *Mein Kampf*. It was militaristic imperialism designed to exploit the economic resources of subject peoples for the aggrandisement of Germany. The German people were easily rallied to the cry that they must be given "a place in the sun," and loyally supported the power policy of the dominant Prussian military caste when they were told that Britain designed the annihilation of Germany and had by unscrupulous diplomacy achieved its encirclement by Allies.

Twenty years later "a place in the sun" was to be called *Lebensraum* (living space) by the Nazi leaders, and again, when Germany had armed herself far beyond the strength of her prospective antagonists, she answered the protests of the non-aggressive nations against her brutal invasions of weak neighbouring States, that she was resisting "encirclement." The amount of truth in this may be better measured after considering the events which preceded the revolutionary Nazi régime.

What makes the second outbreak of the European war such a tragedy is that until the Nazi régime under the fanatical and unbalanced Herr Hitler had been allowed to grow strong by aggression, there had been opportunities for a sane settlement of European problems.

The cause of Britain and France in the War of 1939 was as just as any cause ever sponsored by great nations prepared to go to war for it. There was no question of aggression or the desire for more territory and power by the Western democracies. Before the darkness settled over international relations in Europe in the second half of the second decade of so-called peace, sincere efforts had been made, especially by Britain and the United States, to help German economic reconstruction. Unfortunately in the first phase of the peace, the two most powerful of the victorious Allies were guilty of short-sighted or malicious policies which seriously delayed any reconstruction and brought about more widespread economic collapse, not only in Central Europe, but also in Russia, than would necessarily have resulted from the terrible war.

In that first phase there was still some chance of a democratic triumph in Germany, as there had been, though in a lesser degree, in Russia after

that country had dropped out of the war. But fear, and then greed, influenced the policies first adopted, increasing instead of ameliorating the bitterness of the suffering combatants, which after an exhausting war of extermination was an inevitable obstacle in the way of pacification and was enough ultimately to upset the best-intentioned plans of the wisest legislators. Nevertheless, there were influences on the side of an enlightened peace, and they came near to overcoming the evil legacies of the war.

Although it became a fashion to exaggerate this after the first decade following the Armistice of November 1918, there was a very real sense of the futility of war, strengthened by the comparative freedom of most of the fighting men from personal feelings of enmity. This was not universal, even among the soldiers, sailors, and airmen, but it was general, and a natural result of the fact that the majority of them by profession and inclination were civilians only anxious to see an end to the bloody horrors and the privations of warfare. They wanted, as most men at all times do, only a chance to live their own lives in comfort. The reaction from war was echoed in the hearts of the civilian populations, too, but here the instinctive and sane impulses of human nature were more confused and distorted by the nationalistic propaganda that the years of war had developed as a means to maintain strength of purpose against the national enemies. The legacy of hatreds and bitterness left by the war had been increased by this modern use of propaganda designed to blacken the deeds and characters of the "enemy" and to cover with moral justification, even when there was no legal justification, the war activities of the peoples' own rulers.

Mr. Lloyd George, who, in spite of some blunders, had been Britain's most effective wartime Minister—brilliant, vacillating, Machiavellian politician with an entirely inadequate knowledge of European problems—was the least likely to be successful as our representative during the negotiations for a reconstruction of war-shattered Europe. But he did, of course, become our chief spokesman. And this aftermath of warfare occurred inevitably in the politics of our Allies, especially of a France dominated by her old fear of the barbarian German hordes who had twice ravaged her.

At home the political leadership of Mr. Lloyd George in the post-war general election of 1919 which swept the Coalition Government into overwhelming power on the cries of "Hang the Kaiser!" and "Make the Germans Pay!" might be contrasted with the address of the then Sir

Douglas Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, to the Army of Occupation on the Rhine. "I hope," he said, "that it will be a generous peace not touched by the spirit of vengeance against a nation whose soldiers have fought for their Fatherland with the same courage as ours." Sir Douglas Haig may have been at vital moments in the campaign on the Western Front a culpably stupid military Commander, as the most penetrating critics of the first Great War have maintained. In causing colossal and unnecessary losses of life by slowness in adapting military methods to the latest conditions of warfare, however, he had his counterpart in the French and German Armies also; nevertheless, his sentiments after the Armistice were typical, for all his shortcomings, of that better spirit of mutual forgiveness and sanity which existed on all sides, and especially among the great armies of soldiers returning to find a place again in civilian life.

The Treaty of Versailles with Germany in June 1919 was followed by a number of other treaties during the next few years, that represented the attempts of the Allies to bring about a settlement in Europe without any real sacrifices on their part. In September 1919 the Treaty of Saint-Germain was signed with Austria, and that of Neuilly with Bulgaria in the following November. The League of Nations was actually formed in January 1920, and the following June the Treaty of Trianon was signed with Hungary.

Treaties, pacts, and "plans" succeeded one another every year, and we shall have to take note of the significance of the more important, and attempt to define the trends of policy which inspired them. But our survey has to begin with a gloomy chapter. After the Armistice was signed on November 11th, 1918, the Allies' blockade of the rapidly collapsing countries of Central Europe and of Bolshevik Russia was maintained until the peace treaties were signed, and it has been held that this continuation of our blockade completed the ruin and destitution of the civilian populations, and contributed largely to the subsequent economic difficulties of reconstruction. Moreover, the whole conduct of the treaty-making with Germany was inspired by the victors' outraged sense of their own injuries and the consciousness of being at last in command of the situation. The British supported France in the determination to extract from Germany every possible penny of reparation, while all France's conviction was that it must be made impossible for Germany to attack her ever again.

In order to understand more fully the difficulties of arriving at the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, it is perhaps necessary to refer to the

number of secret treaties which had previously been signed during the war, and possibly earlier, by various countries, which suddenly came to light during the Russian Bolshevik Revolution, when copies were found by the revolutionaries in the archives of Petrograd and given to the world. No doubt their publication was the result of malice and jealousy, for, having forsaken her Allies, the then Russian Government had naturally denied herself the spoils of war that had been promised to the Tsarist Government for its activities in the conflict. The rapacity of various nations, which was afterwards to be so noticeable in the Treaty of Versailles, was startlingly revealed by these documents. In the secret treaties, Turkey was to be divided up among Great Britain, France, Russia, and Italy. Japan was to be given the German leases in China and the German islands in the Pacific Ocean north of the Equator. Other German colonies were to be divided among France, Great Britain, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. France was to regain Alsace-Lorraine, and to be given the whole left bank of the Rhine. Italy was promised, by the Treaty of London of 1915, parts of Austria, including the Trentino and the city of Trieste, the Southern Tyrol, Istria, and Northern Dalmatia.

All Russia's claims were, of course, eliminated by her absence from the Peace Conference, and the fact that the Allies had broken off relations with the Russian Government. And indeed at that time Russia was concentrating on achieving the domination of her own land and was not in a position to be interested in claims upon other countries.

Dealing first with the main territorial dispensations, Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France. In the East, Germany handed over the greater part of the two provinces of Posen and West Prussia to Poland. Eupen and Malmédy were given to Belgium. Memel subsequently was seized by Lithuania. Danzig, which was mainly populated by Germans, was made a Free State. Schleswig, on the Danish border, two zones in East Prussia, and the district of Upper Silesia were made plebiscite areas in which the populations would be allowed to decide later by vote whether they would remain German or not. The Saar, with its valuable coal-mines, was to go to France, though politically it was put under a commission responsible to the League of Nations with the right to determine its destination by vote after fifteen years. German colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Ocean were put under mandates to the League of Nations and virtually became possessions of the various countries administering them.

As a result of all this, the creation of new States and of the drawing of new frontier lines on the map of Europe, large minorities of one nation still remained under the domination of another. A slice of the Austrian Tyrol and 230,000 of its German-speaking people were given to Italy. Three million Germans in Sudetenland were included in the population of 13 millions of Czecho-Slovakia. East Prussia was divided from the bulk of Germany by the Polish Corridor. Austria was reduced to a small State entirely lacking in balance between industry and agriculture. Hungary lost 71 per cent. of its land and 61 per cent. of its population. In Poland there were minorities amounting to 31 per cent., in Roumania to 18 per cent., and in Yugo-Slavia to 12 per cent.

In addition to this, Germany was disarmed. It was specified that her battle fleet, her submarines, heavy artillery, machine-guns, munitions, and aeroplanes were to be sacrificed, and her tools and machinery for the making of munitions were destroyed. Her army was limited to 100,000 men recruited by voluntary enlistment—a number considered necessary for police purposes—and compulsory service was abolished in order to deprive her of reserves. Rifles were their only weapon. The Navy was deprived of battleships and submarines and the war-harbour of Heligoland was to be destroyed and no longer fortified. No fortifications or soldiers were to be allowed within fifty kilometres of the left bank of the Rhine, and only limited fortifications were permissible on the Eastern frontier.

Financially, Germany had already, in the Armistice agreement, accepted the responsibility for all damage to the Allies' civilian populations resulting from her aggression, and, in addition to handing over all merchant ships of 1,600 tons and over, and vast quantities of livestock and coal, an immediate payment of 20,000 million gold marks (approximately £900 million) was to be made, pending the ultimate fixing of the final amount, on May 1st, 1921.

A Reparations Commission was set up, and the area west of the Rhine and three bridge-heads at Mainz, Coblenz, and Cologne on the east bank were occupied by Allied military forces. This was to continue for fifteen years at Germany's expense, and might be prolonged in the event of her failure to meet her obligations, when additional territory could be occupied.

The treaties subsequently imposed upon the other enemy countries—Austria, Bulgaria, and Hungary—contained a similarly distorted sense of justice which boded ill for the cause of peace. But if the more obvious

faults of the treaties have to be stressed, their virtues, inspired by the ideas published in President Wilson's Fourteen Points, must not be overlooked. The 1914-1918 war had resolved itself largely into a war of liberation from the aggressive Powers. The new minorities created, sometimes with good reason—as in the new State of Czecho-Slovakia—owing to a natural frontier or some other strategic consideration, were small compared with the minorities that had been liberated. But the chances of a permanent resettlement were impaired from the start by short-sighted and selfish treatment of the two greatest States—Germany and Russia.

Meantime the Reparations Commission, from which America had withdrawn her representative, was preparing the bill which was to be presented to Germany. On May 1st, 1921, this was presented. A sum of 132 billions gold marks was to be paid, of which France was to receive 52 per cent., Great Britain 22 per cent., Italy 10 per cent., and Belgium 8 per cent. This was shortly followed by the vast printing of paper money, and eventually the complete devaluation of the mark. Germany asked for a moratorium in 1922, but the French refused—against the advice of Great Britain—and in January 1923 they occupied the Ruhr in order to collect, under duress, the reparations which they still believed Germany was able to pay.

Great Britain refused to take part in this step, which was met by the passive resistance of all classes of workers in this rich industrial area. In this they were encouraged by the German Government, but by the summer of 1923 the mark was valueless, business was at a standstill, and the whole population was on the verge of starvation.

As the outcome of this, and the French occupation of the Ruhr, which was costing more than it produced, a commission was set up under the American General Dawes, to draw up a temporary plan for the resuscitation of Germany and for further reparation payments. Under this plan Germany received an international loan to enable her to re-establish her currency on a gold basis, and arrangements were made for repayment. This was followed by the economic and financial recrudescence of Germany and a revival of her industrial activities. It also convinced France once again that Germany had really been able to pay reparations had she so desired, and increased her fear that Germany might once again become in a position to build herself up as an enemy of France.

At the time of the Versailles Treaty, France had endeavoured to secure pledges of support by Great Britain and the United States to come

to her assistance in the event of her being attacked by Germany, but when the American representative was withdrawn from Versailles and the American Government refused to sign the Treaty, this pledge ceased to exist so far as America was concerned, and, in view of the fact that neither country was pledged without the other, Great Britain was also released from the promise. With the beginning of the rebirth of Germany, therefore, France began to look for other military alliances, and did, to some extent, secure an encirclement movement with the German border States, including Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Roumania, and Yugo-Slavia, although these latter really did not actually touch Germany at any point. And this in spite of the fact that France had helped to establish the League of Nations, and as a member of the League had undertaken to preserve peace by negotiation rather than by resort to arms.

Unfortunately for Europe, the British found it difficult to understand French policy, based on security at all costs, and the French were suspicious of the British ignorance of their political preoccupations. British policy very soon after the war began to show the influence of the City and of its concern for world-wide trade, in which Europe was essential to prosperity. But the economic Europe envisaged by British interests included a powerful reconstituted Germany. Had economic policies for the benefit of all been feasible and acceptable to all parties from the beginning, the extreme revolutionary movements of Germany, Russia, and, let us add, of Italy—which were the consequence of economic needs first of all—might never have dominated the peoples of these countries and confronted the capitalistic democracies with antagonistic systems. But after the initial errors of Britain and France in their distortion of justice so that it came to seem like victimization of the vanquished, the British Government soon showed its old detachment from European politics.

The financial and trading interests had been alarmed by the signs of European economic collapse, and the new policy dictated by these interests characteristically appeared in Britain (but not in logical France) in the guise of an enlightened ideal. While the majority of the French people saw in Mr. Lloyd George's attempted rapprochements with the defaulting State of Russia, and his increasing abandonment of the interests of smaller nationalities, a denial of the peace treaties, in Britain he had the ready support of the pacifist free churches, the Left-Wing Labour movement, which was closely akin then to international Communism, and the disillusioned ex-Service men. Here it seemed that the British

policy, which more and more aimed at setting up Germany and Russia as quickly as possible as the big trading units of Europe, was actually a practical application of President Wilson's idealism, which had been distorted most cynically at Versailles.

The French found it hard to understand how quickly we could, when skilfully but unobtrusively led by our financial and commercial interests, forget our Allies' sufferings, and the political repercussions of the European debacle. Here were we concentrating on the re-establishment and expansion of our trade markets, and incidentally taking full advantage of our superior situation after the war compared with that of the shattered countries of the Continent. Had Europe been settled first, the policy might have been splendidly justified by events, but as things stood we were not even enlightened enough to pursue our own policy clearly. We fully shared the indignation of our Allies at the secret treaty signed at Rapallo in April 1922 between Russia and Germany in the middle of the Genoa Conference, at which Britain, represented by Mr. Lloyd George, had hoped to get a general agreement between the new Soviet Union and the chief European countries. Although we had already made a trade agreement with the Soviet Union, this agreement at Rapallo was the first official recognition of the Soviet by a big Power. Our own muddle was underlined by the short-sighted objections at home to the Government's attempts to get a general understanding with the Soviet, which, besides being "Bolshie," refused to honour the international debts of the old régime. The chief creditors of the old Russia had been Great Britain, France, Belgium, the United States, and Italy. Largely on account of the failure of Genoa, Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition Government was followed by a Conservative and anti-Russia Government, whose policy in this respect was reversed by the first Labour Government to come to power, in 1924.

At that time it could be said that there was some hopeful prospect of European reconciliation; there were Germans who recognized that Germany had a function of reconciling East and West Europe. Britain and France, after a good deal of misunderstanding, were beginning to see that real European stability depended first of all on their own economic policies, and that these need not be mutually hostile. The democrats of Germany might well be able to carry their country with them in an enlightened policy with her former enemies for the common good, and the Dawes plan had still a chance of being worked satisfactorily, and in conjunction with the gradual settlement, if not the total abolition, of



"reparations." Even Roumania and Poland had made attempts to negotiate with the revolutionary Soviet Government, while most of the European countries, including Great Britain, had recognized Russia *de jure*. The hope of bringing Russia into European councils was eventually realized, but by the time that she had joined the League of Nations, Germany, Italy, and Japan were out of it and antagonistic.

The difficulty of reconciling British and American views of settlement with European and particularly French views was well expressed by M. Louis Aubert (*The Reconstruction of Europe*, 1925) :

"In the eyes of Europeans, the plans for the reconstruction of Europe elaborated by Anglo-Saxons appear just, in so far as the reconstruction of Europe—reparation of damages, revival of credit, resumption of commercial relations, stabilization of exchange, etc.—is a matter of economic adjustment ; but they seem less just when they carry the process of simplification to the point of treating the reconstruction of Europe as a purely business matter, such as the simple refloating of a formerly prosperous concern by means of the usual commercial and financial methods, and when they use economic arguments as a weapon against the political system according to which Europe has been reconstructed by the treaties. The most recent and the best illustration of this attitude is to be found in the recent negotiations in London, where American and British financiers, very well disposed toward France, insisted upon the elimination of political considerations from the discussion of the reparation question, because they thought it to be in the interest of France herself that the matter be handled on a purely economic basis. For, in the eyes of Anglo-Saxons, the intermittent resistance which their plans encounter in Europe appears exaggerated and dangerous ; because Europe refuses to see that reconstruction is a purely economic matter, and because she seems blinded to her own best interests by concentrated bitterness and hatred, by aspirations and ambitions of a past age. How many times have I seen this fundamental opposition confirmed, as well in the newspapers as in negotiations—the attitude of Europe being often ill-defined, but based on deep-seated instinct ! How many times also have I noticed that when, thanks to an effort to reach a mutual understanding, it has been found possible to reconcile these two principles, a lasting peace has resulted ! ”

So far from gaining any lasting peace, up to this time an embittered and distressed Europe had continued squabbling. Some of these disturbances were merely the inevitable aftermath of drastic changes brought

about by the peace treaties, and not necessarily a condemnation of the redrawing of national frontiers.

In the vital area of Central Europe, that involved the control of the great Danube basin, instead of the loose empire of Austria-Hungary, there were now five autonomous nations actually in the Danubian area, and some of them were neighboured by other States whose frontiers had been either altered or drawn along ethnological boundaries that had not been recognized since the establishment of the German and the Austro-Hungarian Empires. There was the new Hungary, for instance, adjoining the new Austria on the west, with the new State of Czecho-Slovakia to the north, the new State of Yugo-Slavia and the greatly swollen State of Roumania to the south. A resurrected and quarrelsome Poland was on the northern boundary of Czecho-Slovakia, and with its "Corridor" to the Free City of Danzig, and its own seaport of Gdynia, it also separated East Prussia from the rest of Germany. France, because of her loans and her political concern to preserve them intact as Allies, only by putting pressure on Czecho-Slovakia and Poland prevented them from fighting each other about the Teschen area, compelling them to accept a compromise agreeable to neither—that the coal-fields there should go to Czecho-Slovakia and the city of Teschen to Poland.

Yugo-Slavia and Roumania also were assisted by French loans; alarmed by the claims of Hungary for restoration of territory and several threats of the restoration of the Hapsburg dynasty in Vienna, these countries joined with Czecho-Slovakia in a defensive alliance called the Little Entente. This was skilfully planned, with French approval, by the Czech President, Dr. Masaryk, whose long campaign for the liberation of his people is a modern epic of European politics.

Unfortunately the establishment of autonomous Governments of this kind held some serious objections which only time, great patience, and a mood very different from that left by the treaties in Europe could have removed successfully. So long as some of the small nations were at loggerheads, a satisfactory system of trading between them was impossible. The States which had benefited by the treaties and were prepared to agree together on tariffs and transport facilities were naturally opposed by the unsatisfied nations. As remarked already, Austria's economic position, divorced from Germany, was extremely precarious, and for political reasons alone—to put off her union with the Reich—she was subsidized by the Allies. Both France and Italy feared the possibility of this Anschluss, while Britain for a time passively concurred in their opposition.

Before Russia had dropped out of the war, the Allies had promised Russia the possession of Constantinople, which to Roumania had meant the menace of Russian control of the Straits. Her shipment of the harvests of her great alluvial plains to the West would have been at the mercy of a Russia also ready to export grain. She had not forgotten how, after her co-operation with Russia in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, Russia had annexed Bessarabia, a rich province of great strategic value. Actually Bessarabia was mainly Russian, but after Russia's collapse, it is not surprising that Roumania made it part of the price for her assistance to the Allies. Like so many of the resettlements, it also contained the probability of an attempt by the injured party, at the first favourable opportunity, to recover the lost property. So long as Europe remained dominated by narrow conceptions of national sovereignty, irrespective of the general benefit resulting from free economic development, such questions were bound to remain sources of potential war.

The curious results to Turkey of the last war originated in Mr. Lloyd George's vagueness about Near-Eastern problems, and the consequent delay in concluding a treaty with her. The final treaty of peace with her, signed at Lausanne, was not concluded till 1923, but it proved in the end to be the most generally satisfactory, showing that the delay had been useful in clearing the air. It was preceded by the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920, made with the old Constantinople Government of the Sultan, in despite of the Young Turk movement under Kemal Pasha, which virtually already controlled Turkey. The Allies gave Greece permission to retain Smyrna for at least five years, having already allowed M. Venizelos, the then Prime Minister of Greece, to effect the occupation by Greek troops. But Greek internal weakness, with the return of the pro-German ex-King Constantine, and secret agreements by Italy and France with the Kemalist party, resulted in an entirely new line of policy.

Another reason for the delay in signing even the first of the treaties with Turkey, that of Sèvres, besides the British belief that a consideration of the future of Turkey could be shelved, was the hope that the United States would accept a League of Nations mandate for the Straits areas and Armenia, the nations which had been originally allocated to Russia in the secret treaties, but which had naturally been jettisoned by the new revolutionary régime.

President Wilson was originally in favour of undertaking this responsibility, but eventually it was decided to reject it. When this became



THE LATE KEMAL AT-TURK



GENERAL İSMET İNÖNÜ  
THE LATE PRESIDENT AND THE PRESENT PRESIDENT OF TURKEY



clear, the Treaty of Sèvres was signed by the representatives of the Sultan. But in the meantime, Mustapha Kemal, the future Atatürk, had been energetically raising forces and re-creating the Turkish Army in Asia Minor. The result of this was that the contingents from forces of the Allied nations in Turkey were found to be in a very precarious position. In view of this and of the fact that America had detached herself from European affairs, it was decided to restore Constantinople and its immediate neighbourhood to Turkey, and to hand over the rest of Eastern Thrace to Greece, both sides of the States being demilitarized under separate national control, so as to assure the freedom of the Straits—a formula which meant that Turkey would no longer have any power to regulate the passage of shipping, either commercial or naval.

By the same token, an independent Armenian Republic had already been set up, with its capital at Erivan, the former Russian territory. This Republic had claimed for itself a large part of North-Eastern Anatolia, and although these claims were backed by President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George, as were those of Greece for the Smyrna territory and Eastern Thrace, the Turks offered considerable opposition to this project.

Early in 1920 a French force was severely defeated at Marash, in Cilicia, by a Turkish army under Mustapha Kemal. It had, of course, been assumed by the Allies that there would be no further Turkish resistance after the Armistice, but the unbounded energy and powers of organization of this one man had enabled the Turks to fight again with renewed vigour and stubbornness, and it became clear to the French that South-East Anatolia could not be annexed without the use of a large army. France, however, was utterly war-weary, and troops and money could not be found for such adventures. It was therefore decided to concentrate French rule in Cilicia and to renounce Sivas and Adana, and to give up any attempt to advance from North Cilicia.

Turkey was therefore left free to take the offensive against the Armenians, and was assisted by the Soviet Government in her efforts. The Russians quickly captured Erivan, and set up a Government of Armenian Bolsheviks, which ceded to Turkey all the territory which had belonged to her in 1914, together with the district of Kars, which had been taken by Russia in 1878.

Turkey, which was one of the defeated enemies of the war, therefore came out of the peace with her borders enlarged to the east, while as a result of her campaign against the Greeks, Adrianople and Eastern Thrace

(which the same treaty had given to Greece) were handed over to the Turks by the Treaty of Lausanne, signed in July 1923. This was the treaty which Mr. Lloyd George, in his book *The Truth About the Peace Treaties*, describes as "abject, cowardly, and infamous surrender." But once again Mr. Lloyd George was mistaken, for he was condemning the most successful of the peace treaties. The control of the Dardanelles was also given back to Turkey at a later date, a sign that the old British anti-Russian policy had been revived, for the Dardanelles remain Russia's only sea-route to Near-Eastern Europe.

Yet another reason for the special situation of Turkey can be traced to the fact that this involved one of the questions on which France, represented in 1919 by M. Clemenceau, differed seriously from Great Britain. Britain, early on in the war, had recognized France's special interests in Syria, and, wrote Sir Valentine Chirol, who had observed the negotiations personally,

"later on we had too easily left them out of account when we encouraged the Arabs to rise against the Turks by holding out hopes to them that their reward would be complete national independence. The French Foreign Office still laboured under the traditional delusion that Syria was profoundly devoted to France, and it was very suspicious of our relations with Feisal, whom it was inclined to regard as merely a British puppet employed to queer the French pitch. From my own knowledge of Syria I ventured to warn M. Clemenceau that, except amongst the Maronites of the Lebanon, Syrian devotion to France had never been more than skin-deep and that he might meet with far greater difficulties than he seemed to anticipate in safeguarding French interests, if the Arabs were driven to believe that French policy made light of the promises to which France herself had been a party during the war. He retorted with the facile *tu quoque* that we might meet with similar difficulties on similar grounds in Mesopotamia; but he listened quite patiently when I tried to show him that the two cases were not entirely parallel, and that we at least approached the problem in a different spirit. It was far less easy to answer him when he asked me whether Zionism, to which we were, I knew, pledged to the hilt, was not still more incompatible with the national aspirations we had done so much to foster amongst the Arabs."

In the light of subsequent events the gloomy prophecies of the consequences of both French and British policy towards the Arabs appear fully justified. The French had to suppress ruthlessly their revolts in

Syria, while the British were faced by Arab opposition to Jewish immigration to Palestine, which would have become a major problem had not the final crisis before the War of 1939, and then the outbreak of the war itself, compelled both Arabs and Jews, in spite of their irreconcilable differences, to agree in supporting Britain against the latest aggression of a great tyranny. At least they knew that on balance the claims of nationality stood more chance from the Allies' victory than from German imperialism, with which in their minds was linked that of Italy. It is true that Signor Mussolini had been alarmed first of all by the Nazi invasion of Austria, and as soon as the so-called civil war in Spain was determined with Italian help in favour of Franco, the insurgent general, he applied the soft pedal to the much-lauded "Rome-Berlin" Axis. This had been especially obvious after Herr Hitler's final annexation of Bohemia and Moravia in the spring of 1939. This fact, however, had not overcome the strong repugnance of the Arabs to the Italians, which had developed into fear of Italian intentions after the invasion of Abyssinia. It is one of many instances where ruinous mistakes by one side were cancelled out by the action of the opposing side.

Italy's rôle in the period under review emphasizes the effect of a tragic Alice-in-Wonderland story presented by Europe. She had been a weak ally in the War of 1914-1918 and, compared with Britain and France, was still weak when the war ended. As a consequence her share of the benefits of victory fell short of her expectations. Her serious economic position also encouraged the movement towards social revolution that was alarming the Governments of all the Powers, including the victors. She was finally threatened with internal chaos when Signor Mussolini was hoisted into the saddle by the Fascist Blackshirts to establish a dictatorship. The "March on Rome" coup by the Fascists (during which Signor Mussolini was lying low in Milan awaiting the issue) took place in October 1922.

The new Fascist Government quickly repressed all forms of political liberty, but it also began to reorganize the country's internal affairs and no doubt achieved valuable results, especially in public works and hygiene. But such systems of government, arising out of economic difficulties and devoted to the development of economic self-sufficiency, live at the expense of the majority of the people, and the Italian people, while admiring their Duce's forcible assertions of Italian prestige abroad, became almost as poor as the Germans in all the necessities and comforts of life.



In foreign affairs the Duce was the first of the important rulers of Europe to flout the League of Nations. In 1923, when a commission was defining the frontier between Greece and Albania, the Italian delegate and his three assistants were shot by bandits. Signor Mussolini sent Italian warships immediately to bombard Corfu. The island, which was coveted by Italy, was occupied, and an indemnity of 50 million lire was taken from Greece. All that the League of Nations did was to propose that the indemnity should be deposited with the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague while the claim was considered. This suggestion was accepted by Italy in Geneva, but turned down in Paris at the behest of M. Poincaré, who wanted to assure Italian co-operation in the invasion of the Ruhr. The League had already shown that its chief members were not prepared to carry out the terms of the Covenant when this was not convenient. Greece at the time was too feeble to be a nuisance, but the new Fascist Italy greatly appealed to the Western Powers as a potential bulwark against their chief bogey, which was Bolshevism.

Although Italy was dissatisfied by her gains from the war, she obtained the important Trentino from Austria-Hungary, with the Adriatic seaport of Trieste. But she was jealous of the new State of Yugo-Slavia in the Balkans, and the unofficial seizure of Fiume on the eastern Adriatic by the firebrand poet-airman D'Annunzio became another illegal *fait accompli*. The "Free State" of Fiume officially lost its status by a Treaty signed at Rome in January 1924, by which Italy acquired the harbour and town of Fiume, and Yugo-Slavia the sovereignty over Port Baros and the Delta. As Yugo-Slavia needed an outlet, Italy agreed to lease for fifty years at one gold lira a year the Thacon di Revel quay, while the railway-station was to be an international frontier station. With the formation of the Little Entente between Yugo-Slavia, Roumania, and Czecho-Slovakia, however, the importance of Yugo-Slavia increased, and French support of the Entente was at the root of subsequent Italian animosity against France, which involved also anti-British policy.

Italian policy continued to show how political considerations might override economic considerations. Italy's invasion of Abyssinia was represented to the Italians as full of possibilities of new wealth, but if the heads of the Fascist State ever believed their own promises, they were soon undeceived. An expensive campaign from 1935 to 1936, ending in the annexation of the whole country, had resulted in heavy casualties and the prospect of a heavy economic drain for a long time

to come. In spite of the popular indignation at home, the British Government was reluctant to take any action against Italy as a member of the League of Nations, knowing that a virtual agreement had secretly been made with Italy on the lines of the Maffey Report for the partition of Abyssinia between Italy and Britain. The price of the deal was to be Signor Mussolini's adherence to an Anglo-French combination against Germany, which had begun to rearm at a rapid rate.

This policy was a reversal of Britain's policy of re-establishing Germany economically and helping her to rearm, so that she might be the chief European barrier to "Bolshevism." As a consequence of such divisions of policy, the protest of the League and the application of Sanctions against Italy, restricting her trade, proved ineffective except in embittering Italian sentiment against the Western Allies, and leading to the Rome-Berlin Axis. Here again, Signor Mussolini could not have regarded such an alliance as economically comparable with friendly relations with Britain and France, but he was able to claim the might of Germany in support of his political demands.

One of the great American Foreign Affairs writers—Ferdinand Kuhn, Junior—has written in *We Saw It Happen* :

"Perhaps if the Tories had been in office while the depression gained momentum there might have been a New Deal Government in Britain simultaneously with our own; the world might have been spared such tragedies as Sir John Simon's tenure of the Foreign Office."

Undoubtedly the world did suffer from this tenure, and historically we must at least lay some of the blame of subsequent happenings to the uncertainties, vagaries, and pusillanimity of British foreign policy. Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, has, above all others, been steadfast in his aim to preserve peace and create conditions in which peace could be maintained, but certainly he has not always been too wisely helped by some of his colleagues.

To strengthen Italy's strategic position the impoverished country was now compelled to undertake great naval and air expansion programmes, and the first consequence of this was seen in Italy's intervention in the Spanish Civil War.

Mr. Anthony Eden, the Foreign Minister, who had upheld a strong League policy against Italy in pursuance of Foreign Office policy, had been negatived by more powerful influences in the Government which represented British financial interests, and at the head of which was the

Prime Minister, Mr. Neville Chamberlain. Mr. Eden, however, as a loyal Conservative, remained in office, but when the British Government's policy of a quite farcical non-intervention in Spain again cancelled his League policy he resigned. His resignation may be said to reveal the complete demoralization of the League of Nations in international affairs and the temporary eclipse of traditional Foreign Office policy, which was aimed at opposing the strongest military power of the Continent, now represented by Germany allied with Italy. There is little doubt that the British Foreign Office still expected to wean Italy from the Axis by offering her more solid economic advantages, and thanks to Herr Hitler's later aggressions and increasing economic difficulties this had become a probability before September 1939.

The extraordinary situation that developed in Europe owing to our unscientific and uncontrolled economics and the consequently unchecked cycles of prosperity and depression must be briefly surveyed, especially in relation to German politics, which became the clue to what we have described as the resumption of the 1914-1918 war, with a revolutionary Germany in the place of a Hohenzollern and Prussianized Germany. But the Spanish chapter is so significant that a pause must be made to record the final cynicism of European politics before Europe began sliding down the last slope to ruinous war. Extreme views were ardently expressed on both sides concerning the civil war in Spain.

The position was complicated by factors that were often secondary to the main issue. For instance, the majority of Roman Catholics were inclined to view the overthrow of the Spanish people's elected Government as a means to the restoration of the Church's influence. Certainly the Church was the historic ally of the nobility and the propertied classes of Spain. These ruling classes had been largely dispossessed by the progress of Spanish internal politics from increasing Liberalism towards a form of "Red" politics encouraged by Soviet emissaries. It was also maintained by the traditionally Conservative circles that "Bolshevism," which threatened Spain, had to be suppressed at all costs, even though the Spanish Government of 1936 was a much more likely strategic friend of Britain and France than a reactionary Government put into power by Fascists and Nazis. It was asserted also that the elections had been accompanied by illegal acts and preceded by victimization of the propertied classes on the Russian model. There was probably some truth in such assertions, considering the extreme bitterness of party feelings in Spain, after the severe repressions of popular opinion during a long period

of corruption. But that the overwhelming majority of the Spanish people—exceptionally divided as they were into distinct racial and traditional groups—opposed the insurrection against this Government was sufficiently proved by their resistance to the well-armed invasion headed by General Franco, then the Commander of the Spanish forces in Morocco.

Moreover, the Spanish Government in 1936 was still a member of the League of Nations, and its legal status made British non-intervention and its passive assistance of the insurrection entirely indefensible except upon the solitary grounds that anything was justified in repressing "Bolshevism."

It is not our function to voice the extreme point of view on either side, and probably the finally balanced view of the Spanish Civil War will not be recorded until Europe has recovered from its long nightmare of opposing ideologies and muddled economics. It is fair, however, to note that in spite of the reluctance of the British Government to confirm popular indignation at home, it had to accept the League Council's resolution in December 1936 declaring that foreign intervention had contravened Article 10 of the League Covenant. The League Assembly in September 1937 passed a resolution reiterating the declaration and stating categorically that army corps of a foreign Power were in Spain, and our National Government had to support the motion. The declaration also promised an early end to the farce of "non-intervention" if the foreign troops were not completely withdrawn. But though German bombing planes and technical experts, Italian armies, Air Force, and submarines were known to be helping Franco's armies in fighting the Spaniards, the British Government retained its policy of non-intervention, even to the point of excusing the bombing of British merchant ships legitimately trading with the Spanish Government. An effective answer to Lord Halifax's statement at a League Council meeting in January 1938, still defending "non-intervention" because the war in Spain was a "civil war," was made by Señor Del Vayo, the Spanish Government's Foreign Minister :

"If this military rebellion has developed into the appearance of a civil war, it is not, as the honourable representative of the United Kingdom seemed to believe, as the result of a natural process, but merely because Germany and Italy have placed the weight of their military power on the side of the rebels.

"This support, from the moment that it took the form of the

despatch to Spain of military forces belonging to the regular armies of these two countries, represents a definite act of aggression. This fact has been explicitly acknowledged in many official Italian declarations, as well as by the British Prime Minister, when, in a letter recently published in the Press, he stated that it was 'public knowledge that a considerable number of regular Italian troops have been in Spain since the early days of the war.' And it is this aggression and this alone—that is to say, a definite violation of international law, expressly envisaged in our Covenant—which the Spanish Government has submitted to the League of Nations.

"And if we have raised this question before the Council, it is not only because Spain is the victim of this foreign aggression, but also because such aggression constitutes a danger to general peace. The object of this aggression is to establish in Spain a totalitarian régime which would allow Spain to be used as a possibly decisive factor in the policy of domination adopted by the two aggressor countries. This is proved not only by the statements of the rebel leaders in favour of the dictators and against the democracies of Western Europe, but also, and far more directly, by the German and Italian aerodromes constructed on Spanish territory, the long-range cannon mounted by German and Italian artillery near the French frontier and Gibraltar, by the foreign occupation of the Balearic and Canary Islands and of Spanish territory in Morocco, and by a whole series of other facts which could usefully be the object of the investigations we have proposed."

A good deal more was said on both sides without changing the general impression left by the very cruel Spanish war that it became a political conflict of certain European Powers on Spanish soil, with some of them using military force. It was claimed by Franco supporters that Italian intervention could be excused by the fact that the "Reds" had bought Russian fighter planes and that Russian technicians were in Barcelona from an early stage of the war. But it could not be said that Russia's supplies, which, in any case, were comparatively slight and ceased long before the end of the conflict, were illegal. A better case for illegality might have been made out for the refusal of Britain and France to allow the Spanish Government to purchase the arms it needed in self-defence, and certainly the League's impotence, in the face of its own resolutions, was another sorry incident in its abortive career as the preserver of justice and peace in Europe.

The total result of the war in Spain, ending in the establishment of a Franco dictatorship, besides the frightful sufferings of the Spanish people,

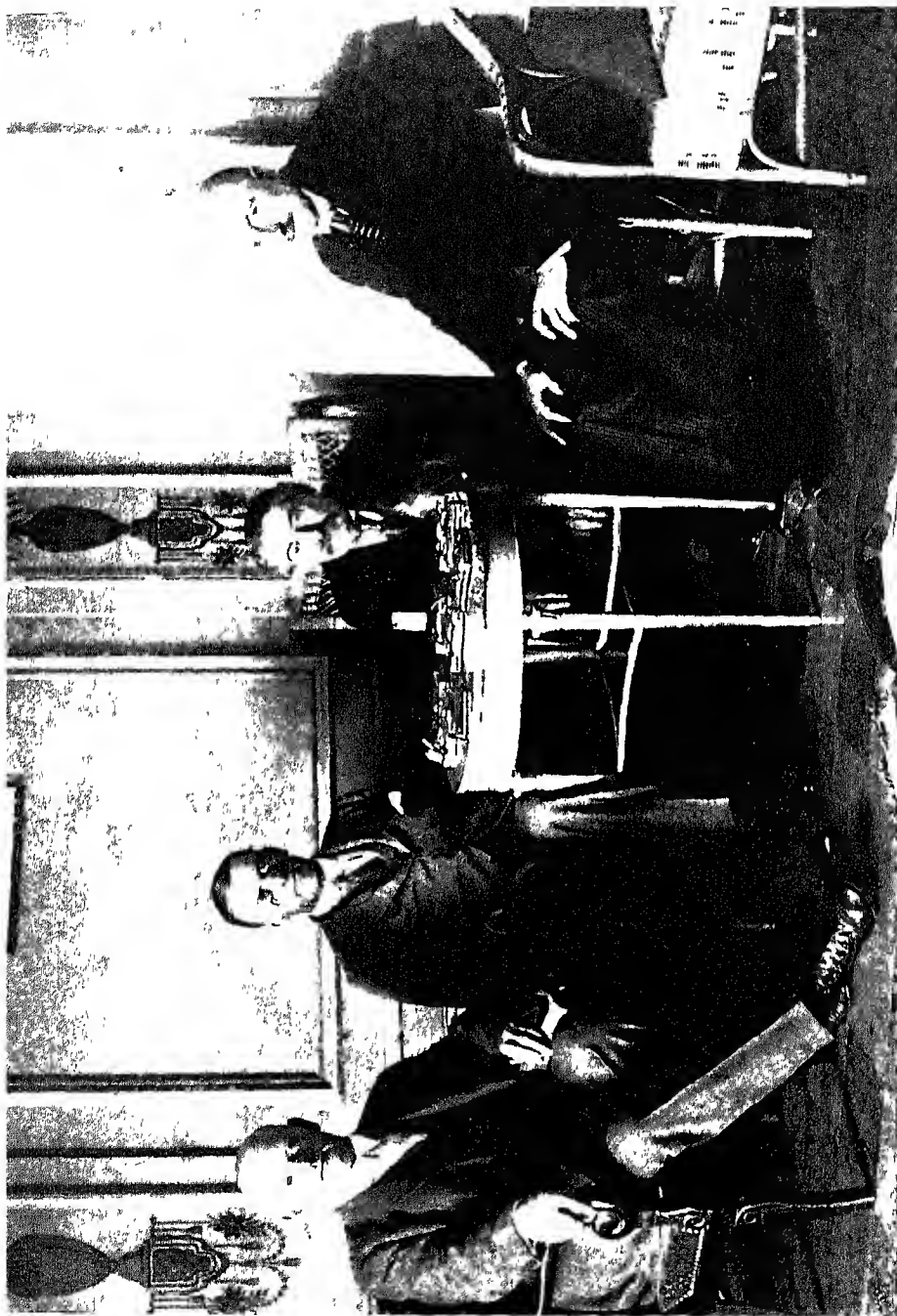
was an accentuation of the political division in Europe between Right and Left politics, with the promise of renewed class-warfare, not merely in Spain, but in every country except Russia. The totalitarian conception of power-politics had triumphed at the expense of the democratic countries, and once more France and then Great Britain might have found the strategic consequences deadly serious but for still greater disaster looming ahead. The instability and growing desperation of Nazi opportunism was to cancel the new Spanish dictatorship's sympathy by the revelation of the hollowness of the loudly proclaimed "anti-Comintern" policy, while emphasizing Germany's brutal disregard of small nations' independence.

War was becoming increasingly likely on a big scale after the overthrow of the popular Government in Spain, and once more the fear of Russia's encouragement of social revolution gave way to anxiety about German military power. The worsening of the situation here arose out of economic difficulties which encouraged political extremism, but before surveying this morass, as it appears, of misunderstandings and the emergence of purposefully evil aims that were to justify our utmost antagonism, it is necessary to recall that the tragedy was preceded by a promising interlude of disarmament. This had been begun in 1921 by the Washington Conference agreement of the four chief naval Powers—the British Empire, the United States, France, and Japan—to confer together about any points in dispute, especially about their Pacific possessions. It seemed after this as if the United States might gradually collaborate in European settlement, and it enabled the Powers concerned to end the awkward Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Next a Five-Power Treaty was concluded for naval parity between the U.S.A. and the British Empire, and a Japanese limit of 60 per cent. of the tonnage in capital ships of either. French and Italian capital-ship tonnage was fixed at 35 per cent. Besides this Five-Power Naval Treaty, a Nine-Power Treaty also was signed in Washington early in 1922, pledging the signatories to respect the integrity of China. This was in reality a check to Japanese ambitions, obtained by the united influence and interests of the U.S.A. and Britain, and it was extended by an unofficial additional agreement forced on Japan that Kiachow, formerly in Germany's possession, but handed to Japan by the Versailles Treaty, should be returned to China.

The Locarno Treaty, guaranteeing the frontiers of France and Germany and of Belgium and Germany, was the result of free conversations

between Lord D'Abernon, the British Ambassador in Germany, and Herr Stresemann. It was eventually taken up by (then) Mr. Austen Chamberlain and eventually signed amid great acclamation by all the nations concerned. "Locarno," said Herr Stresemann, "must be, not the end, but the beginning of whole-hearted co-operation in the cause of peace." A condition and result of this Treaty was Germany's entry into the League of Nations. More thorny questions were raised then, concerning Germany's frontiers with Poland and Czecho-Slovakia. Germany declined to accept these as final, and the problem was shelved by inducing Germany to sign arbitration treaties with these countries. Great Britain's attitude in refusing to join in any guarantee of the eastern frontiers was here at variance with that of France, who made herself an ally of the new States. It is strange to recall that another difficulty confronting the Locarno Powers was Germany's anxiety not to be involved, owing to her membership of the League, in any hostile action against the Soviet Union. She wished to observe the spirit of her Rapallo pact with Russia. And yet as soon as the Soviet Union in turn joined the League of Nations, her policy in the Assembly was in violent opposition to the Rome-Berlin Axis policy, and she used the League as a vehicle for political propaganda against both the Nazi régime and the timid impotence of the other League Powers. All this controversial opposition appeared to have been a cloak for more fundamental causes of collaboration between revolutionary Germany and revolutionary Russia, when, too late, the Western Powers, in their fear of German intentions in 1939, turned to Soviet Russia to secure a military pact against aggression.

The diplomatic success against Japan at Washington was short-lived. Japan waited for the psychological moment when the Powers in Europe seemed preoccupied with their own rivalries to annex Manchuria, later renamed Manchukuo. This caused less alarm to the Western Powers than it might have done because the immediate consequence was a renewal of friction between Japan and the Soviet Government. The Soviet Union's influence henceforward was cultivated in Inner Mongolia, as a counter-move to Japan's encroachment, and Soviet missionaries penetrated China to spread the Communistic doctrines. Here develops a vast field of fresh intrigues and hostilities, which can only be briefly referred to because of their connexion with events in Europe. The League's protests were ignored by Japan, who resigned, as a preliminary to the achievement of her main object—the invasion of China in 1936 in



LEAGUE OF NATIONS AT GENEVA  
STRESEMANN, AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, BRIAND, AND SCHUBERT HAVING AN INFORMAL CHAT





order to gain control of her vast markets. The U.S.A. and the Western European Powers were seriously alarmed now, but the American sales of munitions to Japan continued until the Embargo clauses of the Neutrality Law were adopted early in 1939. Britain and France, as Japan had calculated, had their hands full in Europe, and could do little to resist Japanese aggression for the time being. They even declined to help China by a war loan, although small credits were given to strengthen Chinese currency.

Germany's recovery after Locarno had been only partial and the Dawes plan merely a temporary measure, so that another international conference was held in 1929 with the object of settling finally the question of German reparations. This mission was again under the chairmanship of an American, and its findings, known as the Young Plan, made provision for annual payments at a rate reduced from that of the Dawes Plan, and for total reparations amounting to one-quarter of the original sum. This was accepted by Germany and a condition was made that the Rhineland should be evacuated, and in 1930 French troops were withdrawn.

Unfortunately, in 1929, the economic depression which was afterwards to develop into a world financial crisis began. Germany, as pointed out in a previous chapter, had been paying her annual indebtedness by money mainly borrowed from the banks of the United States, and when these loans were no longer available, she was no longer able to make the necessary payments. In the height of the financial crisis in 1931 she declared a moratorium, and in the following year the international conference held at Lausanne was made to realize that reparations were no longer payable. Since Germany and her late allies were no longer paying reparations to the victors, England, France, and Italy found it impossible to make their repayments of wartime loans to the United States, although they had not in fact, and never had been excused these payments. Since that time no effort has been, or could be, made to repay these colossal sums, amounting, in the case of Great Britain, originally to over 4,000 million dollars (£820 million), in the case of France to 4,000 million dollars (£820 million), and, in the case of Italy, to half that amount.

In 1933 when Herr Hitler came into power the European situation took on an entirely new turn, Germany was so impoverished that she was unable to buy goods from abroad to meet her requirements. Herr Hitler's first efforts, therefore, were designed to increase the agricultural yield, as to reduce the import of foodstuffs, of practically all of which she was short, and, four years later, he endeavoured to mobilize the efforts of the

country in order to find substitutes for rubber, cotton, petroleum, and other necessary materials.

With this end in view, Herr Hitler announced in January 1937 the beginning of the new four-year plan, with the purpose of making Germany largely self-sufficient by means of her own productions and her own "substitute" productions. Curiously enough, it is this economic self-sufficiency in Russia and Germany, and attempts at the same thing in other countries, that have done so much to hamper and restrict international trade, for while Germany was shown in the beginning to be unable to pay reparations in money, it was equally obvious that she could not do so in kind without the ruin of various trades of other countries, with the result that practically all over the world high tariff walls had to be built to protect national industries from the disastrous competition of dumped goods.

Both in world finance and world trade and industry two impossible situations had arisen. America had accumulated an unwieldy proportion of the world's gold supplies in her cellars, and demanded the repayment of her debts in gold; but since neither the vanquished nor the victors of the Great War had adequate supplies of gold, this was impossible unless the gold was first supplied by America. And victorious countries, as well as the defeated ones, urgently needed to rebuild their trade and industry, which had so largely given place to the output of munitions during the war. They were therefore not really in a position to absorb large quantities of foreign-produced goods, while America was ever building higher tariff walls around herself for the benefit of her own producers. The result was that only for so long as the United States would lend gold to Germany could Germany pay gold to Allies and the Allies to the United States.

It was, however, not until the beginning of the economic world crisis which started in 1929 that the full effects of this began to be felt. In that year, owing to the withdrawal of credits, prices of primary commodities fell to unprecedented levels. Factories throughout the world were being closed, many banks in most countries were suspending operations, and unemployment everywhere was mounting to vast figures. Currency difficulties, which had been apparent in most countries since the end of the Great War, were spreading even to those countries which had been able hitherto to withstand them, and in 1931 even Great Britain was forced to devalue the pound and abandon the gold standard.

The principal object in devaluing her currency was to increase foreign

trade, by enabling foreign customers to buy British goods with a devalued pound. But, as a natural corollary to the British devaluation, a number of other countries which were closely connected with her economically necessarily had to follow her lead, and in 1933 the United States devalued the dollar at roughly the ratio of the devaluation of the pound. In 1936 France also abandoned the gold standard, and in that year and in 1937 again reduced the value of the franc. At these reduced levels, Great Britain, France, and the United States agreed to endeavour to stabilize and maintain their currency; but without any definite basis, such as the gold standard, and no organized international control, apart from private concerns, it proved impossible to ensure a really stabilized currency, which was necessarily the basis of a real revival of international trade. Meanwhile the hostility between the various forms of dictatorship, e.g. Communism, Fascism, Nazi-ism, and the lesser degrees of dictatorship exercised in many other countries—particularly of Eastern Europe—added to the difficulties of the exchange of goods between nations.

Not only was the intensification of nationalism in Europe a drag upon economic recovery, and the cause of a series of local upheavals throughout the interlude between the two big wars, but it appears in retrospect as the impulse behind some extraordinary migrations of persecuted peoples. This nationalism, racial and economic, which was largely disregarded before the Great War, became intensified after 1918, first owing to the consequences of bitter warfare, and then as a means of escaping the economic weakness that threatened to prevent the rapid growth of political and military power. Movements from one country to another became more and more restricted. Before the War of 1914 the only two European countries requiring passports and visas were Turkey and Russia; before that of 1939 every country demanded them. Before the earlier war there were no restrictions on migration. After it every country imposed them.

Following the Bolshevik rising in Russia, hordes of White Russians, estimated at anything from one to three million, although probably slightly over the former figure, escaped to other countries. Many of these were absorbed in other Slav countries, although a considerable number were taken in by France, some by Great Britain and America, and some migrated to China.

Immediately following the War of 1914 there were four major racial refugee movements which were, in the main, remarkably settled by that great explorer and humanist, Dr. Nansen. These were those of the Armenians, the Greeks, the Bulgars, and the Turks. The first three of these

were largely settled through the instigation of the League of Nations, who induced Dr. Nansen to give up further exploration expeditions to take charge of this problem as League High Commissioner.

Beyond paying the expenses of Dr. Nansen's offices, limited to £4,000 a year, the League was not, of course, in a position to give any financial assistance to the programme, but large sums were collected for this purpose by Dr. Nansen, who, from his position as League High Commissioner for Refugees, was also able to negotiate with various countries for the absorption of these refugees.

One of the initial difficulties which Dr. Nansen had to face was that refugees are, for the most part, denationalized, and although persecuted by the country of their origin, or original adoption, they are not given passports to enable them to journey to other States. The mass of the million or so Russian refugees and the quarter of a million Armenians were to be rendered Stateless until Dr. Nansen was successful in creating a new form of passport at a conference in July 1922, which was accepted by fifty-one nations and recognized as the Nansen passport.

It is necessary to point out that in the ordinary way the normal traveller provided with passport and visa is enabled to claim the services of the representatives of his own Government in the foreign countries he may be visiting, or residing in, and is entitled to claim the benefit of legal protection by the courts and police of these countries. But the Stateless refugee, having no country to which he is admitted to belong, can make no such claim. As a result of Dr. Nansen's efforts, however, a series of agreements was concluded at Geneva in 1933, which conferred on Stateless refugees, under the protection of the League of Nations, certain basic rights which normally belong to foreigners travelling, or residing, in other areas. This convention was accepted in nine States.

A further convention of a similar kind, to which seven Governments agreed, was concluded in 1938 in favour of refugees coming from Germany. In 1933 a separate office of High Commissioner for refugees coming from Germany was created to deal specifically with the migration of oppressed Jews and others, who were being driven from Germany by Nazi activities for the "purification" of blood and politics. This was done because Germany, as a member of the League, was thought likely to object to any contribution to the expenses of the existing High Commissioner, and the expenses of the new office were consequently paid from private sources, and no payment was made towards it by the League itself.

After Germany resigned from the League, the two offices were

merged into one, with Sir Herbert Emerson at their head. In July 1938 President Roosevelt summoned a conference at Evian to consider how best to deal with refugees from Greater Germany and Czecho-Slovakia, as a result of which thirty-one Governments formed a permanent Inter-Governmental Committee in an attempt to deal with this increasingly difficult problem. It is clear that when most countries, as in the case of Great Britain, have large numbers of unemployed of their own, they are naturally reluctant to absorb a substantial number of members of other countries. On the other hand, humanitarian feelings are bound to be aroused when these hordes of refugees cannot longer remain within the borders of the countries wherein they have so far spent their lives, and where, were they to attempt to do so, they would not only be made to suffer the hardships of starvation, but would be open to definite and considerable maltreatment. The persecution of the Jews, and of the so-called non-Aryans, in Germany and Austria and—since its annexation by Germany—in Czecho-Slovakia was generally acknowledged to be an outrage by humanity on humanity. But "racial purity" was apparently one of Herr Hitler's firmest beliefs (even though nobody has yet been able to say what a true Aryan is), and it was obvious that nothing could stop him from persecuting and penalizing the Jews in the countries over which he ruled.

There is no doubt that to some extent he was helped in the dissemination of his propaganda against the Jews by the fact that during the time when the German mark was falling to nothing small Jewish financiers with money in other countries were taking advantage of their opportunity and securing German businesses at less than bankrupt prices, and, since the many are always judged by the few, a good deal of hostility was engendered among the German people. There remained, however, in spite of propaganda, a gap between organized Nazi hatred of Jews and the people's comparative indifference.

When Herr Hitler came into power, it was found that in all professions, and in all trades, Jews were out of all proportion to their numbers in the Reich. Jewish lawyers were prominent in the courts, Jewish doctors in the hospitals, Jewish professors in the universities, and Jews, of course, with their natural aptitude for finance, had considerable control of banking and industry. This was one inevitable result of the pre-1914 ban on Jews in the regular Army and in the civil service. The first effort of Herr Hitler was then to make a clean sweep of the intellectual Jew. Throughout the country Jewish judges and lawyers were driven from their posts,

doctors from their hospital stations, professors from their universities. But Hitlerism even went farther than this. Jewish members of the Prussian Academy of Art were dispelled. Musicians, artists, actors, and others were obliged to leave the country, so that Germany suffered the loss of large numbers of valuable citizens of international fame.

The first decree issued under the Reich National Law in 1935 disfranchised all people who had three—and most of those who had two—Jewish grandparents. They were debarred from being officials, State lawyers or doctors, were excluded from literature, the stage, broadcasting, music, and painting, and were not even allowed to labour or join the military forces. In a further law for the Protection of German Blood, passed in the same year, there was even a limit put on to the classes with whom persons of Jewish blood, or partially Jewish blood, might intermarry, while by 1937 even licences for petty trading were withdrawn. Out of the 5,500 people of Jewish origin who were allowed to be employed, only 3,500 were actually in work, although there were still, in the spring of 1939, 402,000 Jews remaining in Greater Germany.

When, in 1938, a member of the German diplomatic staff in Paris was murdered by a fanatic Polish Jew, the German Government, in revenge for that madman's crime, imposed a fine of a milliard marks on the Jewish community in Germany, and still further increased its hostility and maltreatment against them. The means of livelihood and the accumulated resources of the Jews had, by November of that year, definitely and completely been taken from them, and the amenities of cultural and social life were withdrawn. This completely upset the plan that had been formulated for the steady removal of some 25,000 Jews each year from Germany to other countries, which, within a limited period, would have comprised a settlement of the whole German Jewish community. As a result of this, the number of illegal entries into neighbouring countries went up by leaps and bounds, and the total of those in countries of temporary refuge rose from 30,000 to over 100,000, in spite of the closure of frontiers and the strenuous efforts to prevent illegal entry. With the annexation of Sudetenland in October 1938, and of Czecho-Slovakia in March 1939, both the size and the area of the problem were again largely increased, and thousands of refugees from Germany who had previously escaped to Czecho-Slovakia were added to those seeking safety in France.

Sir Herbert Emerson, the League High Commissioner for Refugees, in a broadcast stated that between 1933 and the end of 1938, 350,000

refugees had fled from Germany and Austria, but that, even so, in February 1939 there were still 600,000 persons who came within the Nuremberg laws, and of these 400,000 would have to be evacuated. About one-third of these were Christians.

Clearly, the absorption of these vast numbers in countries already thickly populated was a task of the utmost difficulty. Already 150,000 had been absorbed in various countries, and, apart from Palestine, China had taken some 10,000 Jewish refugees in the Treaty Ports; Australia took 5,000 each year for three years, and other countries were devising methods for their absorption; but when it is remembered that at the end of the civil war in Spain some 400,000 Spanish refugees fled to France, and that there is always a constant flow from various countries, it will be realized that Germany's hostility to the Jew created problems of the utmost difficulty for the more civilized countries of the world.

World trade was growing once more, and moving towards a period of prosperity at the time that international relations were deteriorating during the Spanish War. Severe restrictions, owing to the large number of countries which had assumed control of their foreign currency because of their lack of purchasing power, affected the European Continent more seriously than the world at large. In this progress of the wider world trade, Great Britain, and to a lesser extent France, owing to an extensive Empire and a great maritime commerce, were able to participate; but the respite was of brief duration, and 1939 may be regarded as the last year which in any way approached normality. German aggression from 1938 to 1939 finally shook all confidence, and all over the world the wheels of industry and commerce were slowed down except for increasingly frequent accelerations due to the purchases of food stores and war materials in preparation for a conflict that was coming to be accepted on all sides as almost inevitable.

In this phase especially, had the Nazi leaders been capable of recognizing the hopelessness for Germany of a major war, they must have recoiled from those final acts that at last forced the reluctant Allies to commence hostilities.

The three overwhelmingly greatest Powers in the world, so far as economic resources were concerned, were the British Empire, the French Empire, and the United States. Without many tables of official figures, it would be impossible to reflect their incomparable superiority when set against the totalitarian Axis Powers, and their quondam associate, Japan, while Russia, who was not yet envisaged as the friend of Nazi Germany,



though potentially richer than any of the other totalitarian countries, would prove herself a big disillusionment as a source of supplies.

The general strategic situation on the economic side, however, once the Allies had set about their rapid rearmament to counter the might of Germany, became the essential factor that was to make the next great war a foredoomed continuation of the previous one, that is to say, with less possibility of a German victory than before, and the certainty of new developments of "frightfulness." Probably the Nazi leaders cherished a faith in the creed of the "Blitzkrieg," or lightning-war, so effective when applied to weak States which could not effectively resist the huge military machine of Germany. They also, it appears, were over-confident of superiority in the air, a necessary condition of a rapid victory. Certainly they must have gambled, first upon Britain and France at the last moment refraining from a declaration of war, and secondly upon speedy success after the conquest of Poland. This conquest would free them from the nightmare of the German Army chiefs, a war as in 1914, on two fronts. The necessity for postulating such considerations by the Nazis, as well as a secret agreement with Russia long pre-dating the publication of the Soviet-Nazi Pact of 1939, is forced upon us when we try to weigh up the economic resources of the respective antagonists.

Once war began, the blockade by the British and French Navies—which had an easy superiority over any possible combination of totalitarian powers, and an overwhelming one against Germany's alone, could cut off all Germany's overseas imports. As these necessarily involved most of the minerals (including oil) and fats essential for maintaining a great war for any length of time, to say nothing of food supplies, this fact alone spelt defeat if Germany's victory were not rapid. But leaving aside the possibilities of blockade, and her own counter-blockade—in which no doubt the Nazi leaders suffered one of their greatest disappointments in the first months of the war—Herr Hitler was challenging countries whose economic resources were far greater compared with Germany's than they were in 1914.

Besides the normal developments of industry and commerce after the last war, resulting from the continued progress of transport and of industrialization in formerly agricultural countries, the political difficulties of Europe had caused nationalism in the economic field to spread through the British Empire. A new economic imperialism had developed, greatly encouraging the productive power of the Dominions. Also India, in the period from 1914 to 1938, had become one of the six greatest

industrial countries in the world and yet remained a huge reservoir of certain foodstuffs, raw materials, and man-power.

During the last war the old Free Trade principles had been seen as a source of strategic weakness when peace and security were replaced by widespread war. Not only was Britain absolutely dependent upon sea transport to avert starvation, but many articles, some of them necessary in war, were no longer manufactured at home because it had seemed more convenient to import them, and such supplies had to be hastily organized. Such strategic and political considerations were behind a new economic nationalism that developed in England more quickly in the depression from 1929 onwards, and gained strength from similar movements in foreign countries. Nevertheless, the very mild degree of imperial protection actually arrived at in the form of tariff preferences and trading agreements shows that the older commercial policy of universal free trade and prosperity remained the lodestone of British finance. Indeed, just after the last war, as we have seen, there was so strong a revival of unpolitical economic policy that the French were alarmed for several years by our haste to make Germany "a going concern" even at the expense of reparations to France and Belgium. Foreign trade was still far more important than Empire trade, but a great economic development had taken place in the Dominions and India, and if we take 1923 as the first year when the currents of trade were returning to peacetime conditions, we find that the Empire still accounted for only 26.3 per cent. of British trade, but that among the four biggest importers from Britain were two countries in the Empire. Of about £301 million worth of goods sold by Britain in that year, India bought £90 million worth, the U.S.A. £61 million, France £58 million, and Australia £56 million. Trade with Germany, then small, was destined to increase until it was again checked by the complete militarization of German resources under the Nazi régime. German trade with Britain had always been remarkable for a large proportion of manufactured goods from Germany; she was a far less profitable customer in the eyes of those who thought in terms of economic nationalism than our Dominions and India, or even the United States, all of which took a far higher proportion of manufactured goods from us, so providing employment for skilled English labour and helping us to buy raw material and food. The development of new local industries in the Dominions and India was an important factor in the growth of Empire trade during the period up to 1939. Imperial preferential tariffs never went so far as to interfere with this development and allow

manufactured goods from Britain to spoil the home markets of the new industries, even when the goods could be produced more cheaply in Great Britain. Such an aspect of economic imperialism was quite beyond the conceptions of other empires. But that industrial increase of strength in the Empire became a source of added strategic strength when once again the threat of war found the Empire united more closely than even British statesmen had dared to expect, and certainly in contrast to the anticipations of the countries antagonistic to Britain.

Now Germany's most acute need in obtaining emergency imports of stores and war materials from 1937 onwards, when she henceforth strained every nerve to dominate European councils by sheer power, was gold, and in this her position was most weak. Since her barter agreements were quite inadequate to make up for lack of foreign currency and credits, it is probable that the prospect of raiding the gold reserves of Austria and then of Czecho-Slovakia helped to determine the speed of Herr Hitler's successive blows. Although gold may be considered as a monetary symbol and a mere sign of such a fantastic state of affairs as that already described between the debtor and creditor nations of Europe and America, its importance as a commodity increases in periods of insecurity and the contraction of credit. Certainly it became a sure indication of the comparative purchasing power of nations in the troubled second decade of the interlude between the two great wars.

The economists and financiers were much exercised by problems concerning the functions of gold as money and as a commodity. Old-fashioned and new-fangled economic principles were bandied about, in the quest for a solution of the national and international difficulties of the productive machine age. It was agreed that the machine had gone wrong, and recognized that political animosities occupied a section of some vicious circle of insecurity, over-production, under-production, and, above all, under-consumption. But before some scientifically established new system of international control could be achieved—as it must be in a successfully reconstructed world—the augurs of disaster and the rumours of war were loud about our ears. And after the great depression and the abandonment of the gold standard, the price of gold continued to rise faster than ever. With intensified insecurity in Europe, its purchasing power grew fast, and with a consequent economic gain to the producing countries and an enormous addition of economic power in the gold-holding countries.

If the value in round figures of the annual production of gold from the chief producer countries in 1928—the year before the slump began—be

compared with that for 1937—the year before the final political crises preceding the renewed war—we find that none of the totalitarian States enters the picture at all, excepting Soviet Russia, who appears as a great newcomer to the gold market. Here is a table of figures with a moral :

	1928	1937
	Fine Ounces	Fine Ounces
South Africa . . . . .	10,354,000	11,735,000
U.S.S.R. . . . .	899,000	6,000,000
U.S.A. . . . .	2,145,000	4,089,000
Canada . . . . .	1,891,000	4,055,000
Australia . . . . .	458,000	1,380,000
Mexico . . . . .	699,000	640,000
S. Rhodesia . . . . .	576,000	804,000
Other Countries . . . . .	2,377,000	6,611,000
Total . . . . .	<u>19,399,000</u>	<u>35,314,000</u>

Now these figures do not show the increased value, due to higher prices, but the actual quantity in fine ounces produced in the years compared. While Russia becomes the second biggest producer, shipping most of her gold to London or to New York to finance purchases, the figures show that the British Empire's output in 1937 (including some smaller amounts in the total of "Other Countries") of nearly 20 million ounces was nearly 56 per cent. of the world's total production. This, too, with the prospect of continually increasing mining operations while the abnormally high price of gold was maintained—increases least likely to be experienced in Soviet Russia as soon as that country began to close her doors again to foreign capital and technicians.

In effect this productive power represented a more valuable resource than the huge "frozen" gold stocks kept in vaults that the United States could not use without ruining her export trade. But a comparison of the figures for the gold monetary reserves of the chief holders—figures provided by the League of Nations Intelligence Service—are equally instructive. They underline the economic significance of the line-up of the great quarrelling nations in the 1930's, an opposition of haves against have-nots. The League's figures that follow represent national reserves in millions of old gold dollars. The list of the six countries splits into two groups quite obviously according to their totals and their politics :

	1928	1937
U.S.A. . . . .	3,746	6,835
France . . . . .	1,247	1,681
Great Britain . . . . .	746	1,531
Japan . . . . .	541	269
Italy . . . . .	266	123
Germany . . . . .	666	16

The internal financial condition of Germany was even worse in 1938 than is reflected by these comparisons, for the country was flooded with bonds that could never be honoured by the Government, and this time it was not the result of Allied action, but of German policy, now entirely given over to armaments and war potential of every kind. Any possibility of effective financial assistance and new trading agreements from the wealthy Powers remained out of the question unless she agreed to real disarmament and the abandonment of the Führer's avowed intentions. Why then was Herr Hitler determined to pursue his course? If we assume that the pact with Russia was always kept in mind by the Nazi régime, would such an agreement have made the outlook much brighter? It may be assumed with considerable probability that the egregious Nazi Foreign Minister, Herr von Ribbentrop, had not originated the pact which he signed and published to the world in August 1939. But even if the pact was always held in reserve, even in Herr Hitler's wildest outbursts of anti-Comintern fanaticism, it seems difficult to believe that the Nazi leaders saw salvation in their Soviet ally. Let us suppose that a considerable quantity of Soviet gold was promised the Nazi Government in return for its non-interference with Soviet action in the Baltic, the total possible amount of such gold could be only a negligible annual fraction of Germany's needs, quite apart from the impossibility for her of buying all the essential materials and food from the countries with whom she could maintain communications in war.

But Nazi Germany's biggest disillusionment was bound to be in the matter of other supplies from the Soviet Union. The Soviet's preoccupation with the Far Eastern frontiers and the necessity for maintaining large military and air forces to meet the Japanese threat had already strained her transport facilities and reduced the small margin of her supplies of certain war materials, such as oil. In any case, Russia's natural resources, though potentially great, were not half developed, and it would have taken years to improve her position very much as an exporter. The insignificance of Soviet Russia as an exporter may be most easily grasped by comparing the monthly average value in 1937 of the exports with some of the chief units of the British Empire. These figures, compiled by the League of Nations Economic Bureau, are again in terms of gold dollars:

Canada	.	.	.	.	.	55,370,000
India	.	.	.	.	.	37,190,000
South Africa	.	.	.	.	.	29,620,000
Australia	.	.	.	.	.	28,620,000
British Malaya	.	.	.	.	.	25,650,000
Russia	.	.	.	.	.	16,180,000

By way of clinching the unimportance of Russia's exports, compared with her needs, it may be added that her average monthly total in the same year was less even than little Denmark's, which came to 17,040,000.

Among the most important of Russia's natural resources that she might be able to export, and which might have seemed promising to the Nazi régime, was that of oil. Here again the problem of Russia's own increasing consumption and the meagreness and inefficiency of her transport seriously damaged the prospects for Germany. These two questions are illuminated in one of the Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs (*Can Germany Stand the Strain?* by L. P. Thompson, 1939) :

" Since 1930 Russian oil output has risen by over 50 per cent. But her own requirements have risen yet faster (owing to mechanization of agriculture, the army, etc.), and her exports have consequently fallen far below the 1930 level. In any case, the German import of Russian oil in 1930 was only a small part of Germany's total import of oil and oil products, and a recovery of the 1930 import level would make little difference to Germany's oil problem. If Germany's war needs of oil are to be met, a vast increase in Russian oil exports will be required. There remains the question of how this great volume of oil would be transported."

As for iron ore, so far from being a big item, exports to Germany in 1931 only amounted to 39,013 tons, valued at 1.68 million RM.

" But even if Russia is able and willing to increase her exports of what Germany wants, there remains the serious difficulty of transport. The only really satisfactory route for heavy traffic between Russia and Germany is the Baltic. But the Baltic ports are at the opposite corner of European Russia from the Russian iron-ore and oil-fields. Provided that the Balkan countries offered no objection, the Danube would be a practicable route—assuming that the Black Sea was safe. But it is at present impossible to take oil tankers up the Danube the whole way from the Black Sea to Germany. Either constructional work must be carried out on the river bed or complicated transshipment arrangements would have to be made. If a big iron-ore traffic is to be carried as well as the oil, a great new fleet of river craft will be needed.

" The railways are even less likely to solve the transport problem. Immense distances are involved; the German gauge is different from the Russian; and both Germany and Russia are suffering from a shortage of goods wagons—the goods-wagon stock of all Russian and German railways combined is about the same as the total goods-wagon stock of Great Britain alone, i.e. 1,236,050 in Germany and Russia combined on December 31st,

1937 (latest return available), against 1,296,838 (including private wagons) on the British railways. It has been calculated (*Economist*, September 2nd, 1937) that if Russia could set aside as much as one-tenth of the total wagon stock exclusively for the needs of German trade, the total annual carrying capacity over the very great distances would be less than Germany's annual peace-time imports of iron ore alone. As far as the Russian railways are concerned, the conclusion reached by Colonel Hesse may be quoted from a recent issue of the *Kriegswirtschaftliche Jahresberichte*, issued by the German War Ministry:

" 'A comparison of the Russian railway system with that of other countries shows how far it lags behind them. In view of the fact that Russia must now be counted as one of the mass-producing countries, the insufficiency of its railway system poses an economic problem which it will take years to solve. In a war, when mass-transportation has to be conducted in a short space of time, this problem may prove of decisive importance. It may be said without exaggeration that for many years to come the state of the Russian railways will remain the weakest point in the military-economic capacity of the Soviet Union.' "

And as for stocks in Germany:

" It was part of the Four-Year Plan to build up great stocks of such commodities as Germany cannot produce at home or obtain from near neighbours. The amounts accumulated have been kept secret and, though calculations made in the London commodity markets suggest that the resources of iron, copper, and petroleum are not more than would cover six months' consumption, we should face the probability that these stocks, used to supplement current supplies, may considerably prolong Germany's power of resistance. To speculate on how long they could prolong it would be unprofitable. But the reserves can only last a limited time. As they become exhausted, one section after another of Germany's productive machine must be brought to a standstill. Bottle-necks will be created and the cessation of one activity will hold up others where no shortage of supplies has yet been felt. That is Germany's weakness. For a time she can maintain production to the full. But the higher the output now, the more quickly will stocks run out, and then the 'seizing up' must begin.

" When we are considering stocks, however, we must not think only of hoards of this or that commodity. Besides 'visible' stocks, any nation, or indeed any family, has yet more important 'invisible' stocks. For example, if a man has a brand-new pair of boots, his boot 'stock' is obviously greater than that of a man whose boots are all in holes. There Germany's position is weak.

For several years past the Nazis have severely limited the amount of maintenance work which private or non-war-like industry might do in keeping its property and plant in good order. The effort instead has been directed to preparation for war. As a result, the national estate has been allowed to deteriorate. Even the State Railway has suffered and has been unable to keep pace with the increasing demands made on it. As the Weekly Report of the Institut fuer Konjunkturforschung admitted on June 14th, 1939, 'the increase in transportation and the rising frequency of special problems has led temporarily to a great over-burdening which had unfavourable effects on the operation of the railroad.' Similar complaints have been heard from leading shipowners and industrialists. The 'invisible stock' represented by a well-maintained national estate has already been heavily drawn on by the Nazis."

Instead of planning to give Germany her share in world trade when there were evidences of revival between 1934 and 1937, as would have been feasible by adopting a conciliatory foreign policy and checking the furious competition in armaments that they had set going, the Nazi régime appear to have done exactly the opposite. Herr Hitler had by his declamatory statements cancelled those sections of the Treaty of Versailles that limited German armaments and demilitarized the Rhineland, and his words were followed by action. He also preached the return of Germany's colonies, but promised to be content with negotiation for them. He did not want to risk a big war over any such intangibility while he still had to "rectify" the abhorred Treaty by more tangible conquests in Europe that would make Germany a really formidable opponent. Already Germany was reckoned as one of the greatest Powers again, but his ambitions stretched far beyond the restoration of her prestige. His efforts at carrying out the views expressed in *Mein Kampf*—that Germany must become not only a great Power, but a great land of vast possessions—were concentrated now on her European neighbours, one at a time, in accordance with the rules of strategy.

"Every people," he lays down in his testament, "if it is to live healthily, must have a sufficient area to live on, and since it is the duty of the Nordic race rapidly to increase its numbers, Germany, as the great Nordic people, must have a large amount of extra space for future expansion."

He erroneously put the annual increase of the German population at 900,000. Actually at most it was little more than 500,000, and subsequently showed a decided tendency to fall, in spite of State encouragement



of larger families. Ignoring the fact that several peaceful European countries were more densely populated than Germany, Herr Hitler also maintained that Germany could not escape catastrophe in the long run unless she increased her territories to enable her to feed the population. Upon such childish and elementary ignorance of modern economics was based his ruinous policy, when he required arguments for political hatred. He asserted that a country like Russia, or the United States, with its population spread over a vast area, derives defensive strength from its very vastness. A certain size is necessary for the seat of a world Power, and although Germany had now again reached the status of a world Power, she had not, in his idea, the necessary size. Overseas colonies, however desirable, are not adequate for this purpose, since clearly none could be obtained for the settling of many millions of white peasants. He turned his eyes greedily, therefore, to the vast plains of Central and Eastern Europe, where he saw huge fertile areas thinly populated by "inferior" people, capable of being conquered and held by a German army, and of forming with existing Germany a single realm whose areas provided the only perfect solution. He did not flinch from stating frankly that his policy must be one of annexation, by force if necessary. Nor, prior to the Russo-German Treaty of 1939, did he disguise the fact that the main victim to be despoiled was Russia, although the first enemy to be crushed was France. All frontiers, he claims, and all titles, were established originally by force, and Russia's Bolshevik disorganization is regarded in *Mein Kampf* as Germany's opportunity. In this he proved that he was subsequently carried along, despite his ideas, by the compulsive current that had drawn together at Rapallo the two revolutionary Pariah States of Europe.

"The National Socialist Movement must endeavour to remove the disproportion between the numbers of our population and the extent of our soil," he also wrote, "considering the latter alike as the source of our sustenance and the fulcrum of our power policy. And it must endeavour to remove no less the contrast between our historic past and the prospectless impotence of our present. This it must do while steadily aware that we, as guardians of the highest human type on earth, incur a correspondingly high obligation; and it will be able to discharge this obligation just in proportion as it is careful to make the German people race-conscious."

Nobody must be allowed to argue that the annexations resulting from this policy are an infringement of human rights.

"The frontiers of States are man-made, and men may alter them."

On the contrary, annexations are a moral duty for those who need to expand.

"The *right* to land and soil may be changed to *duty*, if without an extension of soil a great nation seems doomed to ruin."

"Today we number 80 million Germans in Europe. But the correctness of that foreign policy will not be established, until, a bare century hence, 250 million Germans are living on this continent and living, not squeezed together as factory coolies for the rest of the world, but as peasants and workers, who reciprocally assure each other's livelihood by what they produce."

This amounts to saying that it was the duty of German statesmen to gain territory which would allow for three times the German population, i.e. to have twice the elbow room per head. Herr Hitler meant that the new German Empire must be five or six times as large as the post-war Reich. He anticipated annexing, not the Ukraine alone, but a large portion of land beyond it. Although politically and militarily there may have been great deterrents to achieving these ambitions, studied on the map, there was nothing impossible about them. Herr Hitler was aware of the vastness of the Ruro-Asiatic plain, and the immense potentialities therein, especially since the era of railways, in a way that many West Europeans—even today—are not. As in 1914, this was merely part of a general plan which included the smashing of France and the overthrow of the British Empire.

Statistics, however, do not seem to indicate that Germany was too thickly populated, nor that she had an under-proportion of the world's wealth, and in view of Herr Hitler's avowed methods of propaganda, it is unlikely that his statements were sincere.

In answer to President Roosevelt's peace telegram during the crisis over Czecho-Slovakia, Herr Hitler made a speech in the Reichstag on April 28th, 1939, in which he said :

"Mr. Roosevelt declares further that he is absolutely certain that all international problems can be solved at the conference table.

"I answer: Theoretically one should believe that this is feasible, for common sense would indeed plainly show in many cases the justice of the demands on one side and the compelling necessity for concessions on the other side. For example, accord-

ing to all common-sense logic, and all principles of a general human and of a higher justice, nay, even according to the laws of a Divine will, all nations ought to have an equal share in the goods of the world. It should thus not happen that one nation claims so much living-space that it cannot get along when there are not even 15 inhabitants to the square kilometre, while other nations are forced to maintain 140, 150, or even 200 in the same area. But in no case should these fortunate nations further curtail the living-space of these peoples who are already suffering, by robbing them, for example, of their colonies. I should, therefore, be happy if these problems could really be solved at the conference table."

Certainly Germany, if she had less of her share of the world's area, might have had considerably more of the world's wealth, and it might be thought that if she was too thickly populated she might have refrained, at least for the time being, either from encouraging by every possible means increased childbirth, or by importing labour.

Only a few weeks before the conquest of Bohemia-Moravia the German Institute for Business Research wrote :

"Despite the increase in employment which was realized by great efforts in 1938, the general shortage of labour became more acute. If at the beginning of 1938 the uncovered demand for labour was estimated at about 500,000 workers and employees, State-Secretary Syrup estimates the deficit for 1939 at about 1 million . . ."

and one of the first actions of the new administration in the protectorate was to transfer a large number of workers from Bohemia-Moravia.

Until the invasion of Czecho-Slovakia it might at least be claimed by Germans that, in spite of the methods of intimidation, threats, and the stirring up of local strife, there was some moral justification for his ambitions. He had, after all, restricted himself to the undoing of the Versailles Treaty, which had been imposed without argument on his predecessor. He had freed Germans from its penalizing clauses and re-occupied German soil with German soldiers, and reclaimed for Germany the people of Germany. The union with Austria could be justified on the grounds of the majority demands of Austrians themselves. His demands for the self-determination of Sudeten Germans prior to the September 1938 crisis could be excused, in fact, however much the methods adopted to stir up passion were to be condemned. But by his seizing the whole of Czecho-Slovakia he put himself beyond the pale of excuse or justification.

No longer was he limiting himself to the rebuilding of the Germanic

Reich. By this annexation he showed that, whatever his promises, he was out for the ultimate conquest of Europe. By his action he was once again showing that, by the policy of bullying, little by little, he intended to make Germany a country of vast territories within a single boundary.

Although, strictly speaking, the United States of America do not come within the scope of a survey of European politics, it may be worth while recalling a speech by President Roosevelt as far back as October 1937, for no English-speaking democracy can be entirely debarred from British activities. On that occasion President Roosevelt said :

“ The world political situation, which has lately been growing progressively worse, is such as to cause grave anxiety to the peoples of all nations who wish to live in peace and amity with their neighbours. The present reign of terror and international lawlessness began a few years ago.

“ It began through unjustified interference in the internal affairs of other nations or invasion of alien territory in violation of treaties. It has now reached a stage where the very foundations of civilization are seriously threatened.

“ Without declaration of war, without warning or justification of any kind, civilians, including women and children, are being ruthlessly murdered with bombs from the air. In time of so-called peace, ships are being attacked and sunk by submarines, without cause and without notice. Nations are fomenting and taking sides in civil warfare in countries that have never done them any harm. Nations, claiming freedom for themselves, deny it to others.

“ If these things come to pass in other parts of the world, let no one imagine that America will escape, that it may expect mercy, that this Western Hemisphere will not be attacked, and that it will continue tranquilly and peacefully to carry on the ethics and arts of civilization. If those days are not to come to pass—if we are to save a world in which we can breathe freely and live in amity without fear—the peace-loving nations must make a concerted effort to uphold the laws and principles on which alone peace can rest secure.

“ There is a solidarity and interdependence about the modern world, both technically and morally, which makes it impossible for any nation completely to isolate itself from economic and political upheavals in the rest of the world. International anarchy destroys every foundation for peace. It jeopardizes the immediate or future security of every nation, large or small.

“ It is, therefore, of vital interest and concern to the people of the United States that the sanctity of international treaties and the maintenance of international morality be restored.

" War is a contagion, whether declared or undeclared. It can engulf States and peoples removed from the original scene of hostilities.

" Although most of the peoples of the world wanted peace, some nations were spending between 30 and 50 per cent. of their national income on armaments.

" The United States is happy in being able to spend her money on useful works, instead of on huge standing armies. Nevertheless, I am compelled, and you are compelled, to look ahead.

" The peace, freedom, and security of 90 per cent. of the world's population is being jeopardized by the remaining 10 per cent., who are threatening to break down all law and order.

" Surely the 90 per cent., who want to live in peace under law and in accordance with moral standards which have received almost universal acceptance throughout the centuries, can, and must, find some way to make their will prevail.

" Peace-loving nations must make a concerted effort to oppose those violations of treaties, those ignorings of human instincts, which today are creating a state of international anarchy and instability from which there can be no escape through mere isolation or neutrality.

" The epidemic of world lawlessness is spreading. When an epidemic physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in quarantine of the patients to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease.

" It is my determination to pursue a policy of peace and to adopt any practicable measure to avoid involvement in war.

" But we cannot insure ourselves against the disastrous results of war and the dangers of involvement. We cannot have complete protection in a world of disorder, in which confidence and security have broken down. If civilization is to survive, the principles of the Prince of Peace must be restored. The shattered trust between the nations must be revived."

This hope of American co-operation for world peace and democracy was renewed when President Roosevelt called upon Congress to vote credits for an immense programme of rearmament on January 28th, 1939.

" It is with the deepest regret," he said, " that I report to you that armaments increase today at an unprecedented and alarming rate. It is an ominous fact that at least one-fourth of the world's population is involved in a merciless and devastating conflict, in spite of the fact that most people in most countries, including those where the conflict rages, wish to live at peace. Armies are fighting in the East and in Europe, thousands of civilians are being driven

from their homes and being bombed from the air. Tension throughout the world is high."

But, as Mr. Walter Lippman, a famous American journalist on Foreign Affairs, has written :

" When Americans speak of isolation and of being indifferent to the outcome of European wars, they have already taken for granted that there exists a power great enough to localize wars of aggression. In this situation the concept of neutrality can be made to work. But the concept itself rests on a deeper premise, on the tacit and unrealized assumption that the world as a whole will remain orderly under the final authority of sea-power controlled by men who, on the whole, believe in the supremacy of law and in government by consent of the governed.

" Once that assumption is upset, once this pivotal organization of human power is seriously disrupted, the basis of neutrality and of isolation is destroyed. A fatal blow struck at the heart of the British power would not merely destroy the international unity of the Empire, it would mean the destruction of all international order as we have known it. . . .

" We could not be indifferent. All that is familiar and taken for granted, like the air we breathe, would suddenly be drastically altered. A thousand relations to all parts of the world, so well established that we forget they exist, would suddenly be broken. The disruption of Austria-Hungary has changed the face of European politics. The disruption of the British Empire would have consequences so incomparably greater that we cannot really imagine them. One might as well have asked a citizen of Rome in the time of Augustus to imagine Europe when the Roman power had disintegrated. . . .

" The great question is whether a nation placed as we are, and desiring above all else to live, and let live, can preserve its isolation if there is no power in the world which preserves the order of the world.

" The answer to that question is, I am convinced, that we can and we will stand aside only as long as we feel that there is no fatal challenge to the central power which makes for order in our world. . . .

" In the final test, no matter what we wish now or now believe, though collaboration with Britain and her Allies is difficult and often irritating, we shall protect that connexion because in no other way can we fulfil our destiny."

But throughout *Mein Kampf* Herr Hitler preaches the exploitation of power. He never turns aside from the decree that might is right. The

German Empire visualized by Herr Hitler would be supreme in fighting force, and by this power rule the world.

It is useless for the British people to comfort themselves with the thought of their superior Navy. The Greater Germany ruled over by Herr Hitler—as visualized by him—would have man-power, steel-power, coal-power, and oil-power sufficient to build a navy which would sweep Britain off the seas.

Although in his book Herr Hitler advised his fellow-Germans to let go the ex-German colonies under British rule, in office he fanned a growing agitation for their recovery. This is undoubtedly due to Great Britain's reasonableness in other concessions, for, as he says in *Mein Kampf*:

“A clever conqueror will always, if possible, impose his demands on the conquered by instalments. For a people that makes a voluntary surrender saps its own character; and with such a people you can calculate, that none of these oppressions in detail will supply quite enough reason for it to resort once more to arms. The more such extortions are suffered without resistance, the more unjustifiable it comes to seem to people to make any ultimate stand against pressures; which appear each to be new and isolated, though in fact there is a perpetual recurrence of them.”

Germany can, then, only save herself by vast European annexation, and she can only achieve annexation by a European war.

The actual order of the steps eventually mooted by Herr Hitler on achieving power—i.e. rearmament, remilitarization of the Rhineland, the absorption of Austria, the subjugation of Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, and Roumania—is all laid out in logical sequence. The stage at which he would have to fight his decisive war he anticipated would be on the annexation of Czecho-Slovakia, and, as he expected, the remilitarization of the Rhineland and the absorption of Austria were achieved without fighting at that stage. Therefore, in September 1938, he was ready. Great Britain and France, however, were not. The former certainly, in spite of her huge rearmament programme, had concentrated mainly on preparation for defence in case of possible need, and was still working steadfastly for the preservation of peace. Moreover, the geographical difficulties of assisting Czecho-Slovakia were wellnigh insuperable; there was at least some justification for Herr Hitler's original demands, and when the actual seizure came, it was done with such suddenness that it was *a fait accompli* before any steps could be taken to prevent it.

But Herr Hitler was acting on the theory unblushingly set out in *Mein Kampf* that

“they would select the adversary whom they thought most formidable and on a signal would bombard him with a regular drumfire of lies and calumnies. They would keep it up until the nerves of the other side broke down and to regain some peace they sacrificed the victim of the odium—only they never got their peace, the fools !

“Repeat the same performance over and over again ; and dread of the mad dog exercises through suggestion the effect of paralysis.”

Now it may be suggested that this passage was written a long time ago, indeed long before Herr Hitler had risen to power, and that therefore it did not necessarily represent his theory in 1939. Indeed so much was claimed in German propaganda for French and British consumption. Herr Hitler was compiling *Mein Kampf* partly during the time when he was a political prisoner and when his material and worldly position was distinctly precarious. It is true that views held in adversity are apt to be changed when conditions of prosperity are achieved ; that the policies of oppositions and minorities are frequently modified when power is attained. Politicians in this country have quite frequently been known to change their parties and their policies without serious damage to their political prestige. Mr. Winston Churchill, who became First Lord of the Admiralty at the outbreak of the War of 1939 with the acclamation of the bulk of the British nation, is a notable example, not to mention the whole of the Liberal National Party, many of whose members, having forsaken Free Trade and other elements of Liberalism, became members of a Tory tariff Government.

This argument cannot, however, be seriously upheld, for at the beginning of the war a special pocket edition was being printed in millions, so that every German soldier could be given a copy to carry with him into the trenches to enable him to study the tenets of his Führer. Moreover the more recent pre-war speeches of Herr Hitler had confirmed rather than denied his strict adherence to all he advocated in *Mein Kampf*. From time to time he might have disguised or reduced some desire for a specific political purpose, as, for instance, in the case of his demand for the return of Kenya and other former German Colonies when he was intriguing to keep Britain from preventing some campaign of aggression



elsewhere ; or in his claim for Sudetenland only when he was determined to annex the whole of Czecho-Slovakia.

Nevertheless this would seem to be a perfect illustration of how he dealt with his opponents, first in internal German politics, and subsequently in the international field of affairs with such men as President Schussnigg of Austria and President Benes of Czecho-Slovakia. That he intended to go on with Poland as he had begun with Austria and Czecho-Slovakia there can be no possible doubt, and that he believed he would be able to do so unhampered seems probable. In 1934 he had signed a new agreement, a ten-year pact, with Poland, by which he undertook to respect her boundaries. No sooner, however, was the annexation of Czecho-Slovakia accomplished without interference by the Western Powers, than he turned his attention to the "drumfire of lies and calumnies" against Poland, concentrating first on Danzig, and subsequently including the Polish Corridor. At a given point he began his march into Poland, but it was at this juncture that Fate had decreed he should be stopped. Great Britain and France had made an agreement with Poland by which they would come to her aid, and Great Britain and France being ready, Herr Hitler found himself leading Germany into a war destined for his overthrow. Had Great Britain and France considered themselves ready in September 1938, it is unlikely that the ignominious Munich agreement to betray Czecho-Slovakia would have been forced on them by the triumphant Führer, and Mr. Neville Chamberlain might have avoided another example of British diplomacy's use of words to cover intentions. For, while he announced "Peace in our time" after the valueless Berchtesgaden pact with Herr Hitler, there could no longer have remained much doubt in the Prime Minister's mind that war with Germany was inevitable and imminent. That both Britain and France were able to declare hostilities in September 1939 with the moral approbation of the world was due to the fact that they were forced at last to confront and call a halt to a great Power that had adopted methods and a policy deserving the denunciation of European civilization as Satanically evil.

## CHAPTER 3

### HOW THE WAR BEGAN

BY W. GORDON WILLIAMS

AT no time in history had there been a greater feeling of friendliness for the foreigner by the people of Great Britain than in the years immediately prior to the outbreak of the war of 1939. This was perhaps even particularly marked towards the people of Germany, who were completely dissociated from their Government in the minds of the average members of the British public. Contact during the period of occupation after the War of 1914 and the characteristic British feeling of tolerance and goodwill to the vanquished enemy had done much to instil this spirit in the popular mind, which, at the same time, disliked and even abhorred the blustering bullying of the German rulers.

It was in this spirit that successive British Governments, and more particularly that under the Premiership of Mr. Neville Chamberlain, had sought to improve the relationship between Great Britain and Germany. The mistakes and the harshness of the Treaty of Versailles had long been recognized. Many of them had been mitigated or tacitly had been allowed to be ignored by Herr Hitler and his Government. Others were clearly awaiting the appropriate time and atmosphere for discussion and readjustment.

In a memorandum from His Majesty's Government to the Government of Germany dated June 23rd, 1939, it was stressed that Great Britain had no desire for the encirclement of Germany (as the Nazi Government had maintained was the case), nor for the restriction of her trade. Indeed, under the Anglo-German Payments Agreement a considerable supply of free exchange had been made available to Germany for the acquisition of raw materials. This agreement, it was claimed, was as favourable to Germany as any that had been concluded, and

“ His Majesty's Government would look forward to further discussion of measures for the improvement of Germany's economic position, if only the essential pre-condition could be secured, namely, the establishment of mutual confidence and goodwill which is the necessary preliminary to calm and unprejudiced negotiation.”

The one guiding principle of Mr. Chamberlain's Government had all along been appeasement and the desire to establish Anglo-German relations on the basis of the mutual recognition of the needs of both countries, but with full regard to the rights of other nations.

As Lord Halifax had expressed it in a speech at Chatham House on June 29th, 1939 :

" We are told that our motives are to isolate Germany within a ring of hostile States, to stifle her natural outlets, to cramp and throttle the very existence of a great nation. What are the facts? They are very simple, and everybody knows them. Germany is isolating herself, and doing it most successfully and completely. She is isolating herself from other countries economically by her policy of autarky, politically by a policy that causes constant anxiety to other nations, and culturally by her policy of racialism. If you deliberately isolate yourself from others by your own actions, you can blame nobody but yourself, and so long as this isolation continues, the inevitable consequences of it are bound to become stronger and more marked. The last thing we desire is to see the individual German man, or woman, or child suffering privations ; but if they do so, the fault does not lie with us, and it depends on Germany and Germany alone whether this process of isolation continues or not, for any day it can be ended by a policy of co-operation. It is well that this should be stated plainly, so that there may be no misunderstanding here or elsewhere.

" I come next to *Lebensraum* (living-space). This word, of which we have not heard the last, needs to be fairly and carefully examined. Every developed community is, of course, faced with the vital problem of living-space. But the problem is not solved simply by acquiring more territory. That may indeed only make the problem more acute. It can only be solved by wise ordering of the affairs of a country at home, and by adjusting and improving its relations with other countries abroad. Nations expand their wealth and raise the standard of living of their people by gaining the confidence of their neighbours, and thus facilitating the flow of goods between them. The very opposite is likely to be the consequence of action by one nation in suppression of the independent existence of her smaller and weaker neighbours. And if *Lebensraum* is to be applied in that sense, we reject it and must resist its application. It is noteworthy that this claim to 'living-space' is being put forward at a moment when Germany has become an immigration country, importing workers in large numbers from Czecho-Slovakia, Holland, and Italy to meet the needs of her industry and agriculture. How, then, can Germany claim to be

over-populated? Belgium and Holland, and to a less extent our own islands, have already proved that what is called over-population can be prevented by productive work. The wide spaces and the natural resources of the British Empire and the United States of America were not able to save them from widespread distress during the great slump of 1929 to 1932. Economically, the world is far too closely knit together for any one country to hope to profit itself at the expense of its neighbours, and no more than any other country can Germany hope to solve her economic problems in isolation. It is no doubt impossible at present for us to foresee the day when all trade everywhere will be completely free. But it is possible to make arrangements, given the opportunities, which would greatly enlarge the area of freedom. Through co-operation—and we, for our part, are ready to co-operate—there is ample scope for extending to all nations the opportunity of a larger economic life with all that this means, which is implied in the term *Lebensraum*.

“If the world were organized on such lines, neither Germany nor Italy need fear for her own safety, and no nation could fail to profit from the immense material benefits which the general application of science has brought within universal reach. But no such society of nations can be built upon force, in a world which lives in fear of violence, and has to spend its substance in preparing to resist it. It is idle to cry peace when there is no peace, or to pretend to reach a settlement unless it can be guaranteed by the reduction of warlike preparations, and by the assured recognition of every nation's right to the free enjoyment of its independence. At this moment the doctrine of force bars the way to settlement, and fills the world with envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. But if the doctrine of force were once abandoned, so that the fear of war that stalks the world was lifted, all outstanding questions would become easier to solve.”

And in the House of Lords on an earlier occasion (March 20th, 1939):

“For years past the British people have steadily desired to be on friendly terms with the German people. There is no stronger national instinct among our people than the instinct that leads them, when they have a fight, to shake hands and try to make it up. Our people were not backward in recognizing some of the mistakes of the Versailles Treaty that required remedying, but each time during these last years that there has seemed a chance of making progress in understanding, the German Government has taken action which has made that progress impossible.”

It was, indeed, partly with this object that the Anglo-German Naval Agreement had been drawn up and signed in 1935. It was felt at the

time this matter was discussed that, starting with a permanent and inviolable naval agreement between the two countries, a permanent foundation of peace could be established which would pave the way to increased friendliness and mutual understanding in other directions in the future. Such an agreement would, in the first place, obviate the necessity for armament competition between the two countries. It would at the same time introduce an element of stability into the naval situation and thereby help to sweep away any causes of fear that might have existed in the minds of either nation for the other. And since fear is the greatest enemy to international goodwill, so, it was hoped, an edifice of trust was being created.

It was for this reason that the agreement contained no provision for unilateral denunciation at the instance of one of the parties alone, but clearly contemplated termination or modification only by mutual consultation. The agreement of 1935 was, in fact, expressly stated to be permanent in character.

Unfortunately, as on a previous occasion with an earlier German Government, Herr Hitler treated this agreement as "a scrap of paper" and "unilaterally denounced" it on April 27th, 1939.

So far as Germany and Poland were concerned, the agreement reached between them in January 1934 was, of course, expected to be the governing factor for generations to come and to smooth out the difficulties that had previously existed between them. This agreement was valid, in the first place, for ten years, until 1944. It provided that in no circumstances would either party to it "proceed to the application of force for the purpose of reaching a decision in any dispute between them."

The whole agreement, which was brief and should have been of the first importance, runs as follows :

"The German Government and the Polish Government consider that the time has come to introduce a new phase in the political relations between Germany and Poland by a direct understanding between State and State. They have, therefore, decided to lay down the principles for the future development of these relations in the present declaration.

"The two Governments base their action on the fact that the maintenance and guarantee of a lasting peace between their countries is an essential pre-condition for the general peace of Europe.

"They have therefore decided to base their mutual relations on the principles laid down in the Pact of Paris of the 27th August,



HERR DOLLFUSS



DR. SCHUSCHNIGG

AUSTRIA'S STATESMEN



1928, and propose to define more exactly the application of these principles in so far as the relations between Germany and Poland are concerned.

"Each of the two Governments, therefore, lays it down that the international obligations undertaken by it towards a third party do not hinder the peaceful development of their mutual relations, do not conflict with the present declaration, and are not affected by this declaration. They establish, moreover, that this declaration does not extend to those questions which under international law are to be regarded exclusively as the internal concern of one of the two States.

"Both Governments announce their intention to settle directly all questions of whatever sort which concern their mutual relations.

"Should any disputes arise between them and agreement thereon not be reached by direct negotiations, they will in each particular case, on the basis of mutual agreement, seek a solution by other peaceful means, without prejudice to the possibility of applying, if necessary, those methods of procedure in which provision is made for such cases in other agreements in force between them. In no circumstances, however, will they proceed to the application of force for the purpose of reaching a decision in such disputes.

"The guarantee of peace created by these principles will facilitate the great task of both Governments of finding a solution for problems of political, economic, and social kinds, based on a just and fair adjustment of the interests of both parties.

"Both Governments are convinced that the relations between their countries will in this manner develop fruitfully, and will lead to the establishment of a neighbourly relationship which will contribute to the well-being not only of both their countries, but of the other peoples of Europe as well.

"The present declaration shall be ratified, and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged in Warsaw as soon as possible.

"The declaration is valid for a period of ten years, reckoned from the day of the exchange of the instruments of ratification.

"If the declaration is not denounced by one of the two Governments six months before the expiration of the period, it will continue in force, but can then be denounced by either Government at any time on notice of six months being given. Made in duplicate in the German and Polish languages."

During the five years following the signing of this agreement Herr Hitler made a number of speeches friendly to Poland in which he appeared to have not only sympathetic feelings for her, but an understanding of her aims and aspirations. For instance, on May 21st, 1935, he said :



" We recognize, with the understanding and the heartfelt friendship of true Nationalists, the Polish State as the home of a great nationally-conscious people.

" The German Reich and, in particular, the present German Government have no other wish than to live on friendly and peaceable terms with all neighbouring States."

A year later he stated :

" I would like the German people to learn to see in other nations historical realities which a visionary may well like to wish away, but which cannot be wished away. I should like them to realize that it is unreasonable to try and bring those historical realities into opposition with the demands of their vital interests and to their understandable claims to live. I would therefore like the German people to understand the inner motives of National-Socialist foreign policy, which finds it painful that the outlet to the sea of a people of thirty-five millions is situated on territory formerly belonging to the Reich, but which recognizes that it is unreasonable and impossible to deny a State of such a size as this any outlet to the sea at all."

And at Breslau on March 15th, 1936 :

" I have been guided always by the principle that German freedom has nothing to do with injury to others. . . . It is one of the most elementary principles that nations should allow each other to live within their own territories as they wish to live."

While, on January 30th, 1937, speaking in the Reichstag, he said :

" By a series of agreements we have removed existing tensions and thereby contributed considerably to an improvement in the European atmosphere. I merely recall our agreement with Poland, which has worked out to the advantage of both sides. . . . And to my own fellow-citizens I would say that the Polish nation and the Polish State have also become a reality. . . . The peoples of these States (i.e. Italy, Poland, and the Balkan States) *desire to live, and they will live.*"

And again, in February 1938 :

" It fills us, in the fifth year following the first great foreign political agreement of the Reich, with sincere gratification to be able to establish that in our relationship to the State with which we had perhaps the greatest differences, not only has there been a *détente*, but that in the course of these years a constant improvement in relations has taken place. . . . The Polish State respects

the national conditions in this State, and both the city of Danzig and Germany respect Polish rights. And so the way to a friendly understanding has been successfully paved, an understanding which, starting from Danzig, has today succeeded, in spite of the attempts of certain mischief-makers, in finally taking the poison out of the relations between Germany and Poland and transforming them into a sincere friendly co-operation."

It is seen, therefore, that while the Nazi Government was setting a prodigious pace in the building up of armaments on the one hand, Herr Hitler was at the same time uttering soothing words for the benefit of his Naboth's Vineyard in Danzig and Poland and pretending that he had no feeling of hostility towards her nor any intention of territorial annexation.

At this point it is necessary to turn to another page of history in September 1938, for Great Britain and France did not subsequently declare war on Germany solely for the protection of Poland, but also for the stamping out of gangsterism in international relations and the prevention of wanton and unwarrantable annexations of other nations' properties. Had this gangsterism been allowed to go unchecked, there would have been no possibility of peace and progress in the world. Every nation would perforce have had to be continually armed to the teeth in readiness to defend itself and its territory. In such circumstances international trade and exchange would have been brought to a standstill and goodwill among nations would have been impossible, and, practically speaking, world bankruptcy must have followed.

At that date Herr Hitler had decided upon the annexation of Sudetenland on the borders of Czecho-Slovakia. With the methods that were afterwards to become so well known he had, through his agents, spent a considerable amount of time and trouble in stirring up internal difficulties in this area between German and Czecho-Slovakian citizens and creating discontent, factions, and quarrellings. When these had been raised to more or less fever heat he demanded that those parts of Czecho-Slovakia which were preponderatingly inhabited by Germans should come again under German rule or, as he termed it, "protection." With this end in view he proposed to march in with armed forces and take what he wanted. Such action must undoubtedly have led to bloodshed and war.

Now, the British, as has been said, had been passionately pacific ever since the termination of the War of 1914. Live and let live had been their motto, and they desired nothing more ardently than to be at peace

with their neighbours on all sides. When it seemed impossible that peace could be preserved over Czecho-Slovakia, Mr. Chamberlain showed what depth of feeling he had in this matter and to what lengths he would go to maintain the peace of Europe by doing an unprecedented thing. He himself flew three times to Germany to interview Herr Hitler personally in a last endeavour to secure an amicable settlement. He realized, as he has since stated, that there was a problem to be settled, and that Germany had some justifiable claim to certain readjustments of her boundary.

"This," he said, "was something that had existed ever since the Treaty of Versailles—a problem that ought to have been solved long ago if only the statesmen of the last twenty years had taken broader and more enlightened views of their duty. It had become like a disease which had been long neglected, and a surgical operation was necessary to save the life of the patient. . . . The first and the most immediate object of my visit was achieved. The peace of Europe was saved, and if it had not been for those visits, hundreds of thousands of families would to-day have been in mourning for the flower of Europe's best manhood. . . . Nothing that we could have done, nothing that France could have done, or Russia could have done, could possibly have saved Czecho-Slovakia from invasion and destruction. Even if we had subsequently gone to war to punish Germany for her actions, and if after the frightful losses which would have been inflicted upon all partakers in the war we had been victorious in the end, never could we have reconstructed Czecho-Slovakia as she was framed by the Treaty of Versailles."

At the same time he had another purpose in his visits to Germany. He not only desired to secure the most reasonable adjustments of the Czecho-Slovakia-German problem—he also wished to create such feelings and such conditions in Europe that nation could live side by side with nation in amity ; that no Power should seek to obtain a general domination of Europe,

"but that each one should be contented to obtain reasonable facilities for developing its own resources, securing its own share of international trade, and improving the conditions of its own people. I felt that, although that might well mean a clash of interests between different States, nevertheless, by the exercise of mutual goodwill and understanding of what were the limits of the desires of others, it should be possible to resolve all differences by discussion and without armed conflict."



PRESIDENT BENES AND GENERAL SIROVY DISCUSSING THE FAIR OF CZECHO-SLOVAKIA  
CZECHO-SLOVAKIA'S STATESMEN



On Mr. Chamberlain's second visit to Herr Hitler the Führer again stated that he had no wish to include in the Reich people of other races than German, and that this was his last territorial ambition in Europe. This statement Herr Hitler confirmed in a public speech at Wilhelmshaven on April 1st, 1939 :

" We have no feelings of hatred for the Czech people ; we have lived together for years."

At the same time, referring to Poland, he stated :

" We realize that here are two peoples which must live together and neither of which can do away with the other. A people of thirty-three millions will always strive for an outlet to the sea. A way for understanding, then, had to be found ; it has been found ; and it will be ever further extended. . . . But the main fact is that the two Governments and all reasonable and clear-sighted persons among the two peoples and in the two countries possess the firm will and determination to improve their relations. It was a real work of peace."

And again :

" We do not dream of waging war on other nations, subject, of course, to their leaving us in peace."

Then earlier in the Munich Agreement it was laid down that

" the final determination of the frontiers (of Germany and Czecho-Slovakia) will be carried out by the International Commission."

Within six months of this solemn promise and declarations at Munich Herr Hitler had once again broken his word. On March 15th, 1939, he had marched into Czecho-Slovakia and issued a proclamation in Prague annexing Bohemia and Moravia. Thus, in spite of his statement that only Germans were wanted in the Reich and that his desire was to live at peace with his neighbours, subject to their leaving him in peace, all the non-German inhabitants of these areas were placed under the domination of the German Protectorate and were made subject to the political, military, and economic needs of the Reich. Bohemia and Moravia were called self-governing States, but the Reich took charge of their foreign policy, their customs and their excise, their bank reserves, and the equipment of the disarmed Czech forces, and the Gestapo (secret police) were let loose to make their wholesale arrests of prominent individuals.

" Peaceful neighbours " had been converted into subservient citizens

of the Reich by "the most important prerequisite which exists in life, namely, the necessary power at one's own disposal," as Herr Hitler had described it at Wilhelmshaven on April 1st, 1939. "He who does not possess power loses the right to live!"

On this principle, of course, no small or poor nation would have the right to live. The world would quickly be converted into warring elements of international gangsters each grabbing more or less defenceless countries at will.

There had, of course, always been a party in Slovakia which advocated autonomy. That autonomy was, in fact, achieved after Munich in agreement between the various Slovak parties and the Central Government in Prague. The small extremist elements in Slovakia, however, were not satisfied with these arrangements. Indeed, it is probable that they were not allowed to be satisfied with them. Constant stimulation of discontent from Germany had kept them continuously restless, and there is every reason to believe that the sudden decision of certain Slovak leaders to break off from Prague, which was followed so closely by their appeal for "protection" to the German Reich, was not reached independently of outside influence.

It is claimed by the Nazi Government that German intervention in Czecho-Slovakia was justified, owing to the oppression of the German minority by the Czechs. But, as a matter of fact, it was only very shortly before Herr Hitler's ultimatum to the Czech President that the German Press began to renew its campaign of the previous summer about the alleged Czech brutalities against German citizens. Actually the position of the German minority would appear, since the Munich Agreement, to have been one of what might be termed exceptional privilege. Notwithstanding the right of option which had been accorded by Article 7 of that agreement, the members of the German minority were encouraged to remain in Czecho-Slovakia in order that they might form useful centres of German activity and propaganda; and advice to that effect was given to the minority by its leader.

It was as a result of the German-Czecho-Slovak Agreement for the mutual protection of minorities that the German Government obtained the legal right to take a direct interest in the treatment of their minority in Czecho-Slovakia. That minority at once obtained the right to set up separate organizations, and the Czecho-Slovak Government subsequently agreed that the German National-Socialist Party in Czecho-Slovakia should be given full liberty to pursue its activities in Bohemia and

Moravia. How very differently Germany expects her nationals in other countries to be treated from the treatment she herself accords to the people in her protectorates! On the one hand, freedom; on the other, complete subjugation. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the bulk of the incidents which occurred before the German invasion were deliberately provoked and that the effects were greatly magnified.

Subsequent activities in Danzig and the Polish Corridor were so exactly similar as to afford sufficient evidence of this. As Sir Nevile Henderson, the British Ambassador in Berlin, has stated in his final Report on the circumstances leading to the termination of his mission to Berlin:

“The 1938 stories of Czech atrocities against the German minority were rehashed up almost verbatim in regard to the Poles. Some foundation there must necessarily have been for a proportion of these allegations, in view of the state of excitable tension which existed between the two peoples. Excess of zeal on the part of individuals and minor officials there undoubtedly was—but the tales of ill-treatment, expropriation, and murder were multiplied a hundredfold. How far Herr Hitler himself believed in the truth of these tales must be a matter for conjecture. Germans are prone in any case to convince themselves very readily of anything which they wish to believe. Certainly he behaved as if he did believe, and, even if one may give him the benefit of the doubt, these reports served to inflame his resentment to the pitch which he or his extremists desired.”

The Czecho-Slovak authorities received orders to act, and did act, with great restraint in the face of that provocation. It is not necessary to say much upon the assertion that the Czecho-Slovak President really assented to the subjugation of his people. In view of the circumstances in which he went to Berlin, and of the occupation of Czech territory which had already taken place, it is obvious that there was little pretence of negotiation. It is more probable that the Czech representatives were presented with an ultimatum under the threat of violence, and that they capitulated in order to save the people of Prague from the horrors of a swift and destructive aerial bombardment, timed to take place at dawn the following day.

Finally, the suggestion has been made by Nazi leaders that Germany was in some danger from Czecho-Slovakia. But surely the German Government itself can hardly have expected that that contention could be seriously entertained in any quarter.



So far as the British Government was concerned, the immediate result of the German occupation of Czecho-Slovakia was to undo all the efforts towards mutual friendship between Germany and Great Britain which the Government of Great Britain had been trying to cement. A protest was sent to Herr Hitler, the British Ambassador in Berlin was recalled to report, and the visit to Germany that had been arranged for the President of the Board of Trade and the Secretary of the Department of Overseas Trade was suspended. Thus once again the efforts to foster mutual trade and thereby knit the two countries closer together economically were frustrated.

An entirely new situation was created in Europe by this annexation by Germany of Bohemia and Moravia, the country of the Czechs, on March 15th, 1939. "Public opinion in the world," said Mr. Chamberlain in his speech at Birmingham on March 17th, "has received a sharper shock than has ever yet been administered to it, even by the present régime in Germany." Mr. Chamberlain went on to repeat the story of his meeting with Herr Hitler the previous September at Godesberg, when the German Chancellor

"speaking with great earnestness, repeated what he had already said at Berchtesgaden—namely, that this" [the Sudetenland] "was the last of his territorial ambitions in Europe, and that he had no wish to include in the Reich people of other races than German. Herr Hitler himself confirmed this account of the conversation in the speech which he made at the Sportpalast in Berlin . . . and he added: 'I shall not be interested in the Czech State any more, and I can guarantee it. We don't want any Czechs any more.'

"Well, in view of those repeated assurances given voluntarily to me," continued the Prime Minister, "I considered myself justified in founding a hope upon them that once this Czecho-Slovakian question was settled, as it seemed at Munich it would be, it would be possible to carry farther that policy of appeasement which I have described. But, notwithstanding, at the same time I was not prepared to relax precautions until I was satisfied that the policy had been established and had been accepted by others, and therefore, after Munich, our defence programme was actually accelerated. . . .

"How can these events this week be reconciled with those assurances which I have read out to you? . . . What has become of this declaration of 'No further territorial ambition'? What has become of the assurance 'We don't want Czechs in the Reich'? What regard has been paid to that principle of self-determination on which Herr Hitler argued so vehemently with me at Berchtes-

gaden when he was asking for the severance of Sudetenland from Czecho-Slovakia and its inclusion in the German Reich ? . . .

" Does not the question inevitably arise in our minds : If it is so easy to discover good reasons for ignoring assurances so solemnly and so repeatedly given, what reliance can be placed upon any other assurances that come from the same source ?

" There is another set of questions which almost inevitably must occur in our minds and to the minds of others, perhaps even in Germany herself. Germany, under her present régime, has sprung a series of unpleasant surprises upon the world. The Rhineland, the Austrian *Anschluss*, the severance of Sudetenland—all these things shocked and affronted public opinion throughout the world. Yet, however much we might take exception to the methods which were adopted in each of those cases, there was something to be said, whether on account of racial affinity or of just claims too long resisted—there was something to be said for the necessity of a change in the existing situation.

" But the events which have taken place this week in complete disregard of the principles laid down by the German Government itself seem to fall into a different category, and they must cause us all to be asking ourselves : Is this the end of an old adventure, or is it the beginning of a new ? Is this the last attack upon a small State, or is it to be followed by others ? Is this, in fact, a step in the direction of an attempt to dominate the world by force ? "

Herr Hitler's attitude on this matter was expressed in his speech to the Reichstag on April 28th, 1939, when he said :

" I believe that it is a good thing for millions and millions of people that I, thanks to the last-minute insight of responsible men on the other side, succeeded in averting such an explosion, and found a solution which I am convinced has finally abolished this problem of a source of danger in Central Europe.

" The contention that this solution is contrary to the Munich Agreement can neither be supported nor confirmed. This agreement could, under no circumstances, be regarded as final, because it admitted that other problems required and remained to be solved. We cannot really be reproached for the fact that the parties concerned—and this is the deciding factor—did not turn to the four Powers, but only to Italy and Germany ; nor yet for the fact that the State as such finally split up of its own accord, and there was, consequently, no longer any Czecho-Slovakia. . . .

" The future will show whether the solution which Germany has found is right or wrong. However, it is certain that the solution is not subject to English supervision or criticism. For Bohemia and Moravia, as the remnants of former Czecho-Slovakia, have nothing more whatever to do with the Munich Agreement. . . .

"However, I entirely fail to understand how the agreement reached between Mr. Chamberlain and myself at Munich can refer to the case, for the case of Czecho-Slovakia was settled in the Munich protocol of the four Powers as far as it could be settled at all at that time."

While a month earlier, on April 1st, 1939, at Wilhelmshaven he had said :

"We have no hatred for the Czech people and we do not dream of waging war on other nations, subject, of course, to their leaving us in peace also."

Within a week of the occupation of Prague, however, the German Government gave a clear indication of their future intentions. On March 21st they presented a number of new proposals to the Polish Government.

These proposals required that Danzig should return "as a Free State into the framework of the German Reich," and that Germany should receive a route and railway with extra-territorial status through the Corridor. In exchange, Herr Hitler offered Poland a twenty-five-year non-aggression pact and a pledge that Germany would regard the existing boundaries between Germany and Poland as "ultimate."

The Polish answer to these proposals was handed to the German Government on March 26th.

"(a) The Polish Government propose a joint guarantee by Poland and Germany of the separate character of the Free City of Danzig, the existence of which was to be based on complete freedom of the local population in internal affairs and on the assurance of respect for Polish rights and interests.

"(b) The Polish Government were prepared to examine together with the German Government any further simplifications for persons in transit as well as . . . railway and motor transit between the German Reich and East Prussia. . . .

"In formulating the above proposals the Polish Government acted in the spirit of the Polish-German Declaration of 1934 which, by providing the direct exchanges of views on questions of interest to both countries, authorized each State to formulate its point of view in the course of negotiations."

Meanwhile the German occupation of Prague and the German attitude to Poland had convinced the British Government of the necessity for consulting with Poland and other States threatened by Nazi aggression with a view to providing for mutual security.

"In order to make perfectly clear the position of His Majesty's Government in the meantime before those consultations are con-

cluded," said Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons on March 31st, "I now have to inform the House that during that period, in the event of any action which clearly threatened Polish independence, and which the Polish Government accordingly considered it vital to resist with their national forces, His Majesty's Government would feel themselves bound at once to lend the Polish Government all support in their power. They have given the Polish Government an assurance to this effect.

"I may add that the French Government have authorized me to make it plain that they stand in the same position in this matter as do His Majesty's Government."

On April 6th an Anglo-Polish communiqué announced that the two countries would

"enter into an agreement of a permanent and reciprocal character to replace the present temporary and unilateral assurance given by His Majesty's Government to the Polish Government. Pending the completion of the permanent agreement, M. Beck gave His Majesty's Government an assurance that the Polish Government would consider themselves under an obligation to render assistance to His Majesty's Government under the same conditions as those contained in the temporary assurance already given by His Majesty's Government to Poland."

This new technique in international activity which Germany had adopted had shaken the confidence of nearly every country in Europe. Wars were waged without the declaration of war. Pressure was exercised under threat of the immediate employment of force. There was outside intervention in the internal struggles of other States. Countries were faced with the encouragement of separatism, not in the interests of the separatists or minority elements, but in the imperial interests of Germany. Every neighbour of Germany had become unsafe and knew not whether the morrow would bring forcible demands upon them. Every neighbouring country of Germany which valued its national identity and sovereignty felt itself in danger from within inspired and stimulated from outside.

No sooner did Herr Hitler feel that the storm which had arisen over his annexation of Bohemia and Moravia had begun to subside than he turned his attention to Roumania and Poland before finally settling on Poland as his next goal. And this was in the full knowledge of British and French objection and the clear announcement that every effort would be made by them to prevent forcible annexation.

But, as Sir Nevile Henderson has pointed out, two of the less attrac-

tive characteristics of the German are his inability either to see any side of a question except his own, or to understand the meaning of moderation. It would have been understandable to argue that a hostile Bohemia in the centre of Germany was an untenable proposition. But Herr Hitler could see no mean between rendering the Czechs innocuous as a potential enemy and destroying their liberty as an independent people. There is some surprising reason to believe that Herr Hitler himself was disagreeably and literally astonished at the reaction in Britain and the world generally, which was provoked by the occupation of Prague and his breach of faith with Mr. Chamberlain. But while he may have realized his tactical mistake, it did not deter him from prosecuting his further designs.

At the beginning of the year Germany's immediate objectives, apart from the complete political and economic domination of Czecho-Slovakia and the eventual restoration of German colonies, were Danzig and Memel. Herr Hitler felt that it would not add much to the general execration of his aggression and ill-faith in March if he settled these two problems simultaneously with Prague. The democracies were, he thought, so averse to war that they would accept any *fait accompli*. They would be less disturbed if everything was done at once. Thereafter, the agitation would, he anticipated, gradually subside until, after consolidating his gains, he was once more in a position to strike again.

With this plan in view the Lithuanian Government was at once browbeaten into surrendering Memel. The same method was employed at Warsaw, but the Poles were made of sterner stuff. Besides, there were many more of them. Negotiations had been proceeding ever since Munich for a settlement of the Danzig and the Corridor question. After Prague Herr Hitler decided that they must be abruptly concluded, and Herr von Ribbentrop peremptorily dictated to the Polish Ambassador the terms already quoted. Alarmed at the threatening attitude adopted by the German Government in consequence of its rejection of them, the Polish Government mobilized part of its forces (the German Army was already largely mobilized), and the British guarantee to Poland was given on March 31st.

Thenceforward no small nation in Europe could feel itself secure from some new adaptation of Nazi racial superiority and jungle law. The Polish guarantee was followed by unilateral guarantees on Britain's part to Greece and Roumania as well as by long and unfruitful negotiations between the British, French, and Russian Governments. The Nazi

Government, for its part and with considerable success in Germany, represented this attempt as a renewal of the alleged pre-war British policy of encirclement. As a war-cry for the German people it was exceedingly effective up to the signature of the Russo-German Non-aggression Pact on August 23rd. The rest of Nazi propaganda was on two entirely contradictory lines, either of which was destined, according to the development of the situation, to serve Herr Hitler's purpose. The first spread the persistent report that Britain would never go to war for the sake of Danzig. It was calculated to undermine the confidence of the Poles and to shake the faith of the smaller Powers, as well as of the United States of America, in the determination of Britain to resist any further German aggression. The second represented Britain as resolved to make war at the first opportunity on Germany in any case and in order to crush her before she became a too formidable political and economic rival.

Following the statement that the British Prime Minister had made in the House of Commons on March 23rd, 1939, that while His Majesty's Government had no wish "to stand in the way of any reasonable efforts on the part of Germany to expand her export trade," it was resolved "by all means in our power" to oppose a "procedure under which independent States are subjected to such pressure under threat of force as to be obliged to yield up their independence." On the other hand, he stated:

"We were on the point of discussing in the most friendly way the possibility of trade arrangements which would have benefited both countries when the events took place which, for the time being at any rate, put a stop to these discussions. Nor is this Government anxious to set up in Europe opposing blocks of countries with different ideas about the forms of their internal administration."

Two months later, on May 23rd, 1939, the British Ambassador in Berlin warned Field-Marshal Goering that Great Britain and France would be involved in war with Germany if Germany attempted to settle German-Polish differences by unilateral action such as would compel the Poles to resort to arms to safeguard their independence.

Nevertheless, in the Reichstag speech on April 28th, Herr Hitler revealed the terms he had put before the Polish Government on March 21st, and declared that they now represented "the very *minimum* which must be demanded from the point of view of German interests." Herr Hitler also claimed that the German-Polish Agreement of January 1934

was incompatible with the Anglo-Polish promises of mutual assistance and therefore was no longer binding.

On May 5th the Polish Government replied to the new German menace with an explanation of its point of view. The Polish note repeated the counter-proposals of March 26th, and refuted the German argument that the Anglo-Polish guarantee was in any way incompatible with the German-Polish Agreement. The Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs also elaborated his country's case in a speech made in Parliament.

"Every treaty," he said, "is worth as much as the consequences which follow it. And if the policy and conduct of the other party diverges from the principles of the pact, we have no reason for mourning its slackening or dissolution. The Polish-German Pact of 1934 was a treaty of mutual respect and good-neighbourly relations, and as such it contributed a positive value to the life of our country, of Germany, and of the whole of Europe. But since there has appeared a tendency to interpret it as limiting the freedom of our policy, or as a ground for demanding from us unilateral concessions contrary to our vital interests, it has lost its real character.

"The German Reich has taken the mere fact of the Polish-British understanding as a motive for denouncing the pact of 1934. The Reich Government, as appears from the text of the German memorandum, made its decision on the strength of press reports, without consulting the views of either the British or the Polish Government as to the character of the agreement concluded. It would not have been difficult to do so, for immediately on my return from London I expressed my readiness to receive the German Ambassador, who has hitherto not availed himself of the opportunity.

"Why is this circumstance important? Even for the simplest understanding it is clear that neither the character nor the purpose and scope of the agreement influenced this decision, but merely the fact that such an agreement had been concluded. And this in turn is important for an appreciation of the objects of German policy, since if, contrary to previous declarations, the Government of the Reich interpreted the Polish-German declaration of non-aggression of 1934 as intended to isolate Poland and to prevent the normal friendly collaboration of our country with Western Powers, we ourselves should always have rejected such an interpretation. . . .

"As to Danzig, first some general remarks. The Free City of Danzig was not invented by the Treaty of Versailles. It has existed for many centuries as the result—to speak accurately, and

rejecting the emotional factor—of the positive interplay of Polish and German interests. The German merchants of Danzig ensured the development and prosperity of that city, thanks to the overseas trade of Poland. Not only the development, but the very *raison d'être* of the city has been due to the formerly decisive fact of its situation at the mouth of our only great river, and today to its position on the main waterway and railway line connecting us with the Baltic. This is a truth which no new formulæ can obliterate. The population of Danzig is today predominantly German, but its livelihood and prosperity depend on the economic potential of Poland.

“What conclusions have we drawn from this fact? We have stood and stand firmly on the ground of the rights and interests of our sea-borne trade and our maritime policy in Danzig. While seeking reasonable and conciliatory solutions, we have purposely not endeavoured to exert any pressure on the free national, ideological, and cultural development of the German majority in the Free City.

“I shall not prolong this speech by quoting examples. They are sufficiently well known to all who have been in any way concerned with the question. But when, after repeated statements by German statesmen, who had respected our standpoint and expressed the view that ‘this provincial town will not be the object of a conflict between Poland and Germany,’ I hear a demand for the annexation of Danzig to the Reich, when I receive no reply to our proposal of the 26th March for a joint guarantee of the existence and rights of the Free City, and subsequently I learn that this has been regarded as a rejection of negotiations—I have to ask myself, what is the real object of all this?

“Is it the freedom of the German population of Danzig, which is not threatened, or a matter of prestige—or is it a matter of barring Poland from the Baltic, from which Poland will not allow herself to be barred?

“The same considerations apply to communication across our province of Pomorze. I insist on the term ‘province of Pomorze.’ The word ‘corridor’ is an artificial invention, for this is an ancient Polish territory with an insignificant percentage of German colonists.

“We have given the German Reich all railway facilities, we have allowed its citizens to travel without customs or passport formalities from the Reich to East Prussia. We have suggested the extension of similar facilities to road traffic.

“And here again the question arises—what is the real object of it all?

“We have no interest in obstructing German citizens in their communication with their eastern province. But we have, on



the other hand, no reason whatever to restrict our sovereignty on our own territory.

"On the first and second points, i.e. the question of the future of Danzig and of communication across Pomorze, it is still a matter of unilateral concessions which the Government of the Reich appear to be demanding from us. A self-respecting nation does not make unilateral concessions. Where, then, is the reciprocity? It appears somewhat vague in the German proposals. The Chancellor of the Reich mentioned in his speech a triple condominium in Slovakia. I am obliged to state that I heard this proposal for the first time in the Chancellor's speech of the 28th April. In certain previous conversations allusions were merely made to the effect that in the event of a general agreement the question of Slovakia could be discussed. We did not attempt to go further with such conversations, since it is not our custom to bargain with the interests of others.

"In his speech the Chancellor of the Reich proposes, as a concession on his part, the recognition and definite acceptance of the present frontier between Poland and Germany. I must point out that this would have been a question of recognizing what is *de jure* and *de facto* our indisputable property. Consequently, this proposal likewise cannot affect my contention that the German desiderata regarding Danzig and a motor road constitute unilateral demands."

He added that Poland was ready to approach "objectively" and with "their utmost goodwill" any points raised for discussion by the German Government, but that two conditions were necessary if the discussions were to be of real value: (1) peaceful intentions; (2) peaceful methods of procedure.

A Polish memorandum reminded the German Government that no formal reply to the Polish counter-proposals had been received for a month, and that only on April 28th the Polish Government learned that "the mere fact of the formulation of counter-proposals instead of the acceptance of the verbal German suggestions without alteration or reservation had been regarded by the Reich as a refusal of discussions."

On March 31st, 1939, the Prime Minister announced the assurance of British and French support in Poland "in the event of any action which clearly threatened Polish independence, and which the Polish Government accordingly considered it vital to resist." An Anglo-Polish communiqué issued on April 6th recorded the assurance of mutual support agreed upon by the British and Polish Governments, "pending the completion of the permanent agreement." The Agreement of Mutual Assistance was signed

on August 25th. The articles defined the mutual guarantee in case of aggression by a European Power as follows :

#### Article 1

“ Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of aggression by the latter against that Contracting Party, the other Contracting Party will at once give the Contracting Party engaged in hostilities all the support and assistance in its power.

#### Article 2

“(1) The provisions of Article 1 will also apply in the event of an action by a European Power which clearly threatened, directly or indirectly, the independence of one of the Contracting Parties, and was of such a nature that the Party in question considered it vital to resist it with its armed forces.

“(2) Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of action by that Power which threatened the independence or neutrality of another European State in such a way as to constitute a clear menace to the security of that Contracting Party, the provisions of Article 1 will apply, without prejudice, however, to the rights of the other European State concerned.

#### Article 3

“ Should a European Power attempt to undermine the independence of one of the Contracting Parties by processes of economic penetration or in any other way, the Contracting Parties will support each other in resistance to such attempts. Should the European Power concerned thereupon embark on hostilities against one of the Contracting Parties, the provisions of Article 1 will apply.

#### Article 4

“ The methods of applying the undertakings of mutual assistance provided for by the present Agreement are established between the competent naval, military, and air authorities of the Contracting Parties.

#### Article 5

“ Without prejudice to the foregoing undertakings of the Contracting Parties to give each other mutual support and assistance immediately on the outbreak of hostilities, they will exchange complete and speedy information concerning any development which might threaten the independence and, in particular, concerning any development which threatened to call the said undertakings into operation.

## HOW THE WAR BEGAN

## Article 6

" (1) The Contracting Parties will communicate to each other the terms of any undertakings of assistance against aggression which they have already given or may in future give to other States.

" (2) Should either of the Contracting Parties intend to give such an undertaking after the coming into force of the present Agreement, the other Contracting Party shall, in order to ensure the proper functioning of the Agreement, be informed thereof.

" (3) Any new undertaking which the Contracting Parties may enter into in future shall neither limit their obligations under the present Agreement nor indirectly create new obligations between the Contracting Party not participating in these undertakings and the third State concerned.

## Article 7

" Should the Contracting Parties be engaged in hostilities in consequence of the application of the present Agreement, they will not conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement.

## Article 8

" (1) The present Agreement shall remain in force for a period of five years.

" (2) Unless denounced in six months before the expiry of this period it shall continue in force, each Contracting Party having thereafter the right to denounce it at any time by giving six months' notice to that effect.

" (3) The present Agreement shall come into force on signature.

" In faith whereof the above-named Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Agreement and have affixed thereto their seals.

" Done in English in duplicate, at London, the 25th August, 1939. A Polish text shall subsequently be agreed upon between the Contracting Parties and both texts will then be authentic."

With the increase of agitation in the Reich, the local situation at Danzig rapidly became even worse. On June 3rd, the President of the Danzig Senate made accusations against Polish Customs inspectors. Their numbers, he claimed, were being unnecessarily increased and "their behaviour, both in their official and their private life, has given rise to increasing complaint." In order to eliminate constant

"friction and tension, I consider it necessary forthwith to restrict the activity of the Polish Customs Inspectors to a general supervision in conformity with the Agreement. In particular, I must urge that their official activities be confined to the offices, and not

performed outside of them. I can also no longer permit the Danzig Customs officials to take instructions, even in the form of suggestions, from the Polish Customs officials."

The Polish Government on June 10th replied with a denial of the accusations and a statement of the legal rights of Poland in relation to Danzig in the following terms :

" President of Senate's complaint of behaviour of Polish Customs Inspectors on and off duty is not supported by any proofs and must be regarded as unfounded. On the other hand, behaviour of certain Danzig elements, including Customs officials, has been highly provocative, as Commissioner-General has frequently pointed out orally and in writing. Polish Inspectors have reacted with dignity and moderation and refused to be provoked. The Polish Government still expect Senate to take measures to secure personal safety of Polish Customs Inspectors to allow free execution of their duty, with reference to Point 3 of Polish-Danzig Agreement of 1922, which lays down that Polish officials in Danzig should receive the same treatment as corresponding Danzig officials.

" As regards alleged excessive number of Polish Customs officials, Polish Government, on the contrary, consider it at present rather insufficient. This can be shown by present state of affairs as regards handling of goods in Danzig harbour and passenger traffic between Danzig and Poland, and is partly due to obstruction encountered by officials in execution of their duty.

" Polish Government, moreover, cannot agree to any restriction of activity of Polish Inspectors as forecast in note of Danzig Senate. Present treaty arrangements would not permit of Inspectors merely exercising general supervision within customs offices, a restriction which would be contrary to Sections 1 and 4 of Article 204 of the Warsaw Treaty of the 24th October, 1921. In this connexion Polish note also quotes Article 10 of Polish-Danzig Customs Agreement of the 6th August, 1934, which lays down that Danzig officials shall conform to instructions of Polish Customs Inspectors in connexion with manifest cases of smuggling."

On June 27th the Polish Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs told Sir H. Kennard, His Majesty's Ambassador in Warsaw, that a *Freicorps* was being formed in Danzig, and on June 28th and 30th, and on July 1st, Mr. Shepherd, His Majesty's Consul-General in Danzig, reported upon military preparations in the City. A *Freicorps* had been constituted, consisting of 4,000 men, of whom 2,000 were being quartered in barracks in Danzig, and 2,000 in new buildings which were being constructed in Praust, and arms for their use were being surreptitiously introduced into the Free City from East Prussia.

It was felt that Germany would not go to the length of risking a general war in connexion with Danzig, but that she would gradually strengthen her position there, weaken any authority that Poland might still have there, and hope that Poland would finally be reduced to such a state of economic exhaustion that she would have to accept some solution as regards Danzig which would be favourable to Germany. Further, Germany would in the meantime, no doubt, assiduously propagate the idea that Great Britain and France would not implement their guarantee as regards Danzig, and thereby endeavour still further to undermine the Polish morale.

S.A. men began preparing the defences around the Free City, and on the night of June 26th-27th were ordered to stand by for a possible emergency, perhaps in connexion with the celebration in Gdynia of the Polish Feast of the Seas or because the Polish Frontier on the Danzig-Gdynia road was closed to traffic from midnight on June 26th-27th until 4 p.m. on June 27th, presumably in connexion with the completion of the anti-tank defences.

The approaches for a pontoon bridge were in active construction on both sides of the Vistula.

On June 23rd the Danzig members of the German Automobile Club had received an urgent request to complete and return a *questionnaire* regarding their cars. All Danzig owners of motor-lorries, trucks, etc., had recently been ordered to leave them over-night at the military police barracks for inspection, after which each vehicle had been numbered and returned to its owner. Several hundred draught and saddle horses were now similarly ordered to barracks, nominally for inspection, but as some of them had come from distant parts of the Free City, it seemed possible that they might be retained, especially as car-loads of saddles had also been delivered there.

The formation of the *Freicorps* proceeded rapidly.

In addition to an unusually heavily advertised programme of week-end events, nearly a thousand S.S. men from East Prussia and a number of high S.S. officers from Germany arrived almost unannounced on June 25th, ostensibly for sporting contests with the local S.S.

In a speech on that day Herr Forster, the leader of the local Nazis, said :

" Before us lies a new era and for Germany a great epoch. During recent weeks our Danzig has become the centre of political events. We are all aware that we are in the final throes of our fight for freedom. The Free State of Danzig has taken the

longest time. To-day everyone knows that the Free State will soon come to an end, and we also know how it will end."

A considerable number of visiting S.S. men remained when others had left. Those remaining were reputed to have performed their military service in Germany and to be members of Adolf Hitler's *Verfügungstruppen*.

On June 30th, in view of the gravity of the situation, Viscount Halifax suggested consultation between the British, French, and Polish Governments for the co-ordination of their plans. In his view Herr Hitler appeared to be laying his plans very astutely, so as to present the Polish Government with a *fait accompli* in Danzig to which it would be difficult for Poland to react without appearing in the rôle of aggressor. As Mr. Shepherd reported on the same date :

"Horses continued to arrive yesterday, and about 600 of them are being kept in barracks at which large quantities of hay have also been delivered.

"For the last few nights the two great shipyards here which normally work all night were closed under strict guard and all workmen evacuated from them.

"As from tonight Danzig and suburbs were to be blacked out until further notice and, in case of air-raid alarm, all inhabitants were ordered to take refuge in their cellars or public shelters. This order was cancelled this afternoon.

"Former local barracks are now occupied by large number of young men with obvious military training who wear uniforms similar to Danzig S.S. but with the death's-head emblem on the right collar and 'Heimwehr Danzig' on sleeves. Courtyard is occupied by about fifteen military motor-lorries (some with trailers) with East Prussia licences and covered with tarpaulins, also by about forty field kitchens.

"Two thousand men are working twenty-four hours a day in three shifts on construction of barracks at Matzkshuter to accommodate 10,000 men. Work is stated to be well advanced.

"All dressmakers here are said to be working on bedding, clothing, etc., for barracks and their occupants.

"It has just been announced that Tiegensee-Einlage section of Danzig-Elbing road is closed for major repairs until August 1st, and it seems unlikely that pontoon bridge will be ready before that date.

"My personal impression is that extensive military preparations which are being pressed forward so feverishly are part of large-scale operations, but not intended for use before August, unless unexpected developments precipitate matters and that

emergency defensive measures, referred to in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of this telegram, may be due to fear lest those preparations should cause the Poles to substitute a sudden offensive for defensive measures which they have hitherto adopted."

On July 10th, while the situation at Danzig appeared to be becoming critical, the Prime Minister defined the British attitude towards the Danzig problem in a statement in the House of Commons. He pointed out that it was before Poland had received any guarantee from Great Britain that the Polish Government, fearing to be faced with unilateral German action, had replied to the German proposals, by putting forward certain counter-proposals, and that the cause of the Polish refusal to accept the German proposals was to be found in the character of those proposals and in the manner and timing of their presentation, and not in the British guarantee of Poland.

In this speech he reviewed the whole situation of Danzig as follows :

" Racially Danzig is, almost wholly, a German city ; but the prosperity of its inhabitants depends to a very large extent upon Polish trade. The Vistula is Poland's only waterway to the Baltic, and the port at its mouth is therefore of vital strategic and economic importance to her. Another Power established in Danzig could, if it so desired, block Poland's access to the sea and so exert an economic and military stranglehold upon her. Those who were responsible for framing the present statute of the Free City were fully conscious of these facts, and did their best to make provision accordingly. Moreover, there is no question of any oppression of the German population in Danzig. On the contrary, the administration of the Free City is in German hands, and the only restrictions imposed upon it are not of a kind to curtail the liberties of its citizens. The present settlement, though it may be capable of improvement, cannot in itself be regarded as basically unjust or illogical. The maintenance of the *status quo* had in fact been guaranteed by the German Chancellor himself up to 1944 by the ten-year Treaty which he had concluded with Marshal Pilsudski.

" Up till last March Germany seems to have felt that, while the position of Danzig might ultimately require revision, the question was neither urgent nor likely to lead to a serious dispute. But in March, when the German Government put forward an offer in the form of certain desiderata accompanied by a Press campaign, the Polish Government realized that they might presently be faced with a unilateral solution, which they would have to resist with all their forces. They had before them the

events which had taken place in Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, and the Memel land. Accordingly, they refused to accept the German point of view, and themselves made suggestions for a possible solution of the problems in which Germany was interested. Certain defensive measures were taken by Poland on the 23rd March and the reply was sent to Berlin on the 26th March. I ask the House to note carefully these dates. It has been freely stated in Germany that it was His Majesty's Government's guarantee which encouraged the Polish Government to take the action which I have described. But it will be observed that our guarantee was not given until the 31st March. By the 26th March no mention of it, even, had been made to the Polish Government."

On July 14th Sir Neville Henderson discussed with Baron von Weizsäcker, German State Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, a statement by one of the German Under-Secretaries that "Herr Hitler was convinced that England would never fight over Danzig." Sir Neville Henderson repeated the affirmation already made by His Majesty's Government that, in the event of German aggression, Great Britain would support Poland in resisting force by force, and would at once come to her assistance.

It is worth reading Sir Neville Henderson's account of this interview as given in the Official Government publication (Cmd 6106), as it so clearly emphasizes the attitude of the British Government in the event of hostilities breaking out, and can have left no doubt on the matter in the mind of Baron von Weizsäcker.

Reporting to Lord Halifax, Sir Neville Henderson wrote :

"I said to Baron von Weizsäcker that when I was in London I had assured your Lordship and the Prime Minister that Herr Hitler could not possibly be in any doubt as to the facts of the case, namely, that, if Germany by unilateral action at Danzig in any form compelled the Poles to resist, Britain would at once come to their assistance. He (Baron von Weizsäcker) could not himself be under any misapprehension on the subject, and it seemed to me highly undesirable that a member of his Department should talk in this misleading fashion. That sort of remark would be repeated in London, and would once more make His Majesty's Government wonder what further steps they could take to convince Herr Hitler that they were in earnest. It was solely because they doubted whether Herr Hitler was correctly informed on this point that they continued to reiterate their determination to resist force by force in future. If Herr Hitler wanted war, it was quite simple. He had only to tell the Danzigers to proclaim the re-attachment of the



Free City to Germany. Obviously that would put the onus of action on the Poles, but not even that would cause us to hesitate to support them, if Germany attacked them, since we would realize quite well that the Senate at Danzig would only adopt such a resolution on the direct order of the Chancellor.

"Baron von Weizsäcker observed that he was not so certain that the Senate would not act one day of its own accord. I told him that I would not possibly believe that, especially as I clearly realized that the Senate would have already so acted if it had not been for Herr Hitler's orders to the contrary. That he had given those orders was one of the chief grounds for my belief that Herr Hitler still sought a peaceable solution of this question. Nor did the State Secretary demur to this.

"As regards my general observations, Baron von Weizsäcker said that Dr. Keppler, who had been in the early days a kind of economic adviser of Herr Hitler's and still saw him occasionally at long intervals, was an honest man, who was also in fairly close relations with Herr von Ribbentrop. There were, Baron von Weizsäcker said, so many distinctions about a statement to the effect that England would not go to war over Danzig. Anybody, including Herr Hitler himself, might well say that England did not wish to fight about Danzig, and it would be true. Nor did Germany. Anybody, including Herr Hitler, might say that one day Danzig would revert without war to Germany, and that might equally be true as the result of a pacific settlement with the Poles in their own true interests.

"I admitted that there were possibilities of twisting the facts. Yet these were, I said, plain enough, and His Majesty's Government could never be reproached this time, as they had been in 1914, for not having made their position clear beyond all doubt. If Herr Hitler wanted war, he knew exactly how he could bring it about."

A week later Herr Forster, the leader of the National-Socialist Party in Danzig, told the Acting British Consul-General that "nothing will be done on the German side to provoke a conflict," and that the Danzig question could "wait if necessary until next year, or even longer." Whereupon the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs gave instructions to the Chargé d'Affaires in Warsaw to impress upon the Polish Government the need for caution. But in spite of Herr Forster's assurances the Danzig Senate informed Polish Customs Inspectors at four posts in Danzig that henceforth they would no longer be allowed to carry out their duties. This was followed by direct instructions from Germany to Danzig for the first time, and produced a protest from the Polish Government, which stated that it would

"react to any attempt by the authorities of the Free City which might tend to compromise the rights and interests which Poland possesses there in virtue of her agreements, by the employment of such means and measures as they alone shall think fit to adopt, and will consider any future intervention by the German Government to the detriment of these rights and interests as an act of aggression."

Sir Nevile Henderson, on August 15th, discussed with Baron von Weizsäcker the deterioration in the Danzig position, and pointed out that if the Poles "were compelled by any act of Germany to resort to arms to defend themselves, there was not a shadow of doubt that we would give them our full armed support. . . . Germany would be making a tragic mistake if she imagined the contrary." Baron von Weizsäcker himself observed that "the situation in one respect was even worse than last year, as Mr. Chamberlain could not again come out to Germany." Baron von Weizsäcker also discounted the character of Russian help to Poland, and "thought that the U.S.S.R. would even in the end join in sharing the Polish spoils."

That every effort was being made by the British Foreign Secretary to understand Herr Hitler's point of view and enable him to preserve peace without "losing face" there can be no doubt. On August 15th he telegraphed Sir H. Kennard in Warsaw to the following effects :

"Have the impression that Herr Hitler is still undecided, and anxious to avoid war and to hold his hand if he can do so without losing face. As there is a possibility of him not forcing the issue, it is evidently essential to give him no excuse for acting, whether or not conversations about Danzig at some future time may be possible. It therefore seems of the first importance to endeavour to get the local issues (Customs Inspectors, margarine and herrings) settled at once, and not to let questions of procedure or 'face' at Danzig stand in the way. It also seems essential that the Polish Government should make every effort to moderate their Press, even in the face of a German Press campaign and to intensify their efforts to prevent attacks on their German minority.

"In dealing with local Danzig issues, I would beg M. Beck [the Polish Foreign Minister] to work through the intermediary of the High Commissioner, or at all events after consultation with him, rather than direct with the Senate. I should like M. Beck to treat M. Burckhardt [League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig] with the fullest confidence, as in my opinion he is doing his best in a very difficult situation.

"While the present moment may not be opportune for negotiations on general issues as opposed to local differences, the Polish Government would in my judgment do well to continue to make it plain that, provided essentials can be secured, they are at all times ready to examine the possibility of negotiation over Danzig if there is a prospect of success. I regard such an attitude as important from the point of view of world opinion.

"Before speaking to M. Beck on the above lines, please concert with your French colleague, who will be receiving generally similar instructions in order that you may take approximately the same line with M. Beck."

In reply he was informed by M. Beck that he (M. Beck) agreed that Herr Hitler was probably still undecided as to his course of action, and that he (M. Beck) was endeavouring to separate economic from political questions with a view to a quick and equitable settlement of the former.

To what extent, however, Herr Hitler was being guided or misguided by Gauleiter Forster or Herr von Ribbentrop at this time is doubtful. Unquestionably Herr Forster was playing a double game, for a month earlier he had assured Mr. Shepherd of his "loyal collaboration," and said that Herr Hitler would have liked to take an opportunity to talk to the League's High Commissioner about the Danzig situation, but that Herr von Ribbentrop, who was present at the interview at Obersalzberg, had raised objections, to which the Chancellor replied evasively: "Well, it will be a little later; I will let you know."

On August 22nd the news was published of Herr von Ribbentrop's visit to Moscow to sign a non-aggression pact with the U.S.S.R. in the following terms:

"The Government of the German Reich and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, guided by the desire to strengthen the cause of peace between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and taking as a basis the fundamental regulations of the Neutrality Agreement concluded in April 1926 between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, have reached the following agreement:

"The two Contracting Parties bind themselves to refrain from any act of force, any aggressive action and any attack on one another, both singly and also jointly with other Powers.

"In the event of one of the Contracting Parties becoming the object of warlike action on the part of a third Power, the other Contracting Party shall in no manner support this third Power. The Governments of the two Contracting Parties shall in future re-



SIR H. KENNEDY  
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO POLAND

TO GERMANY AND POLAND



main continuously in touch with one another, by way of consultation, in order to inform one another on questions touching their joint interests.

"Neither of the two Contracting Parties shall participate in any grouping of Powers which is directed directly or indirectly against the other Party.

"In the event of disputes or disagreements arising between the Contracting Parties on questions of this or that kind, both Parties would clarify these disputes or disagreements exclusively by means of friendly exchange of opinion or, if necessary, by arbitration committees.

"The present Agreement shall be concluded for a period of ten years on the understanding that, in so far as one of the Contracting Parties does not give notice of termination one year before the end of this period, the period of validity of this Agreement shall automatically be regarded as prolonged for a further period of five years."

The Prime Minister immediately sent a personal letter to Herr Hitler emphasizing the British obligations to Poland, and stating that "whatever may prove to be the nature of the German-Soviet Agreement, it cannot alter Great Britain's obligations." He added that "It has been alleged that, if His Majesty's Government had made their position more clear in 1914, the great catastrophe would have been avoided. Whether or not there is any force in that allegation, His Majesty's Government are resolved that on this occasion there shall be no such tragic misunderstanding."

On August 23rd Sir Nevile Henderson reported his first interview with Herr Hitler earlier in the day. "I told him," he said, "that we had guaranteed Poland against attack and we would keep our word. Throughout the centuries of history we had never, so far as he knew, broken our word. We could not do so now, and remain British." And: "Throughout the conversation I stuck firmly to point (1) namely, our determination to honour our obligations to Poland."

Herr Hitler was "excitable and uncompromising"; his language was "violent and exaggerated, both as regards England and Poland." Herr Hitler observed, in reply to His Majesty's Ambassador's repeated warnings that direct action against Poland would mean war with Great Britain, that "Germany had nothing to lose, and Great Britain much."

It is probable that the newly concluded pact with Russia had produced conditions which, in Herr Hitler's opinion, were favourable to his designs, and that in his own mind he was convinced that he had obtained the whip-hand in European affairs.

With the unknown might of Russia at his back, what nation would dare oppose him? For it is obvious, both from his writings in *Mein Kampf* and in his actions in regard to Czecho-Slovakia, that neither national nor personal honour really meant anything to him. He was incapable of understanding that Great Britain could consider herself "in honour bound" to carry out her undertakings to her own suffering and cost and to no possible advantage for herself. That he himself would not have done so is obvious from the fact that his path to hell is paved with his broken pledges.

Moreover, even with his combined admiration for and jealousy of Great Britain and her achievements of the past, he had never understood the British character and he had been perpetually misinformed on it by Herr von Ribbentrop. Herr Hitler, himself, had never travelled abroad. It is doubtful whether he ever read either much or deeply. It is certain that much of his policy was based on envy and hatred. It is, too, probable, as Sir Nevile Henderson has suggested, that the corporal of the last war was even more anxious to prove what he could do as a conquering generalissimo in the next.

This is also borne out by Dr. Hermann Rauschning, one time Nazi President of the Danzig Senate, in his book, *Hitler Speaks* (Butterworth).

Dr. Rauschning wrote of conversations which took place with Herr Hitler in 1933 and 1934 in which Herr Hitler is reported as saying :

" ' I could at any time come to an agreement with Soviet Russia. . . . I could partition Poland when and how I pleased. But I don't want to. It would cost too much. If I can avoid it, I will not do it. I need Poland only so long as I am still menaced by the West. '

" ' Do you seriously intend to fight the West ? ' I asked.

" He stopped and looked at me.

" ' What else do you think we're arming for ? ' he retorted.

" I said that I thought this would surely call forth a hostile coalition against Germany which would be too strong for her.

" ' That is what I have to prevent. We must proceed step by step, so that no one will impede our advance. How to do this I don't yet know. But that it will be done is guaranteed by Britain's lack of firmness and France's internal disunity. . . . '

" ' Britain *needs* a strong Germany. Britain and France will never again make the common cause against Germany. . . . But I shall not shrink from war with Britain if it is necessary. Where Napoleon failed, I shall succeed.

" ' Today there is no such thing as an island. I shall land on

the shores of Britain. I shall destroy her towns from the mainland. Britain does not yet know how vulnerable she is today.'

" 'But supposing Britain, France, and Russia make an alliance?'

" 'That would be the end. But even if we could not conquer then, we should drag half the world into destruction with us, and leave no one to triumph over Germany. There will not be another 1918. We shall not surrender.

" 'But that stage will never be reached,' Hitler continued, restraining his mounting excitement. 'It could only happen if I failed in all my undertakings. In that case I should feel I had wrongly usurped this place. Fortune follows where there is a firm will. . . .

" 'We need space,' he almost shrieked, 'to make us independent of every possible political grouping and alliance. In the East we must have the mastery as far as the Caucasus and Iran. In the West we need the French coast. We need Flanders and Holland. Above all we need Sweden.'

Dr. Rauschnig throws further light on the character of this teetotal, non-smoking vegetarian in the statement :

" It was interesting to watch Hitler talking himself into a fury, and to note how necessary to his eloquence were shouting and a feverish tempo. A quiet conversation with him was impossible. Either he was silent or he took complete charge of the discussion.

" Particularly notable is his lack of any sense of humour. Hitler's laugh is hardly more than an expression of scorn and contempt. There is no relaxation about it. His pleasures have no repose."

As Sir Nevile Henderson sums him up :

" Herr Hitler's constant repetition of his desire for good relations with Great Britain was undoubtedly a sincere conviction. He will prove in the future a fascinating study for the historian and the biographer with psychological leanings. Widely different explanations will be propounded, and it would be out of place and time to comment at any length in this despatch on this aspect of Herr Hitler's mentality and character. But he combined, as I fancy many Germans do, admiration for the British race with envy of their achievements and hatred of their opposition to Germany's excessive aspirations. It is no exaggeration to say that he assiduously courted Great Britain, both as representing the aristocracy and most successful of the Nordic races, and as constituting the only seriously dangerous obstacle to his own far-reaching plan of



German domination in Europe. This is evident in *Mein Kampf*, and, in spite of what he regarded as the constant rebuffs which he received from the British side, he persisted in his endeavours up to the last moment. Geniuses are strange creatures, and Herr Hitler, among other paradoxes, is a mixture of long-headed calculation and violent and arrogant impulse provoked by resentment. The former drove him to seek Britain's friendship and the latter finally into war with her. Moreover, he believes his resentment to be entirely justified. He failed to realize why his military-cum-police tyranny should be repugnant to British ideals of individual and national freedom and liberty, or why he should not be allowed a free hand in Central and Eastern Europe to subjugate smaller and, as he regards them, inferior peoples to superior German rule and culture. He believed he could buy British acquiescence in his own far-reaching schemes by offers of alliance with and guarantees for the British Empire. Such acquiescence was indispensable to the success of his ambitions, and he worked unceasingly to secure it. His great mistake was his complete failure to understand the inherent British sense of morality, humanity, and freedom. . . . The good intentions of His Majesty's Government were, in fact, patently clear, and had Herr Hitler honestly desired or preferred a pacific settlement, all the arrangements to that end seemed to be in full swing."

Be this as it may, it is probable that Sir Nevile Henderson's visit to Berchtesgaden on August 23rd did have the effect of postponing the invasion of Poland for a week. As he has written in his final report :

" I have some reason to believe—though I cannot confirm it—that the order for the German Army to advance into Poland was actually issued for the night of the 25th–26th August. It is difficult otherwise to find justification for the various orders and arrangements which came into force on the 26th and 27th August. In the afternoon of the 25th August itself all telephone communication between Berlin and London and Paris was unexpectedly cut off for several hours. The celebrations at Tannenberg (the scene of Hindenburg's great victory over the Russians in 1914) were cancelled on the 26th and the Party Rally at Nuremberg on the 27th August ; all Naval, Military, and Air Attachés at Berlin were refused permission to leave the city without prior authority being obtained from the Ministry of War. All German airports were closed from that date, and the whole of Germany became a prohibited zone for all aircraft except the regular civil lines. All internal German air services were also suspended. Moreover, as from the 27th a system for the rationing of food-stuffs and other commodities throughout Germany came into force. That this

latter and—for the public—depressing measure should have been adopted prior to the outbreak of war can scarcely be explained, except on the assumption that war should actually have broken out on the 26th August.

“The fact may well be, as I imagine it was, that Herr Hitler had had in consequence of the Prime Minister’s letter one last hesitation and countermanded the orders to his Army, whereas the other arrangements were allowed to proceed unchecked. But it was not the horrors of war which deterred him. He had unlimited confidence in the magnificent Army and Air Force which he had recreated, and he was certainly not averse to putting them to the test so far as Poland was concerned. In two months, he told me, the war in the East would be ended, and he would then, he said, hurl 160 divisions against the Western Front if England was so unwise as to oppose his plans. His hesitation was due rather to one final effort to detach Britain from Poland. Be that as it may, at about 12.45 on the 25th August, I received a message to the effect that Herr Hitler wished to receive me at the Chancellery at 1.30 p.m. At that meeting he made me a verbal communication.

“Briefly put, Herr Hitler’s proposals therein dealt with two groups of questions: (a) the immediate necessity of a settlement of the dispute between Germany and Poland; and (b) an eventual offer of friendship or alliance between Germany and Great Britain. My interview with Herr Hitler, at which Herr von Ribbentrop and Dr. Schmidt were also present, lasted on this occasion over an hour. The Chancellor spoke with calm and apparent sincerity. He described his proposals as a last effort, for conscience’ sake, to secure good relations with Great Britain, and he suggested that I should fly to London myself with them. I told his Excellency that, while I was fully prepared to consider this course, I felt it my duty to tell him quite clearly that my country could not possibly go back on its word to Poland, and that, however anxious we were for a better understanding with Germany, we could never reach one except on the basis of a negotiated settlement with Poland.”

In a second interview on the same day Sir Neville Henderson reports:

“He was quite calm the second time and never raised his voice once. Conversation lasted from 20 minutes to half an hour but produced little new, except that verbally he was far more categorical than in written reply as to his determination to attack Poland if ‘another German were ill-treated in Poland.’

“I spoke of tragedy of war and of his immense responsibility, but his answer was that it would be all England’s fault. I refuted this, only to learn from him that England was determined to destroy and exterminate Germany. He was, he said, 50 years old; he preferred war now to when he would be 55 or 60. I told him

that it was absurd to talk of extermination. Nations could not be exterminated, and peaceful and prosperous Germany was a British interest. His answer was that it was England who was fighting for lesser races, whereas he was fighting only for Germany; the Germans would this time fight to the last man; it would have been different in 1914 if he had been Chancellor then.

"He spoke several times of his repeated offers of friendship to England and their invariable and contemptuous rejection. I referred to Prime Minister's efforts of last year and his desire for co-operation with Germany. He said that he had believed in Mr. Chamberlain's goodwill at the time, but, especially since encirclement efforts of last few months, he did so no longer.

"... In referring to Russian Non-aggression Pact, he observed that it was England which had forced him into agreement with Russia. He did not seem enthusiastic over it, but added that once he made agreement it would be for a long period."

His lack of enthusiasm is indeed not surprising in view of his many diatribes against the Russian form of government on a number of occasions :

"We see in Bolshevism a bestial, mad doctrine which is a threat to us. . . . I cannot make a pact with a régime whose first act is not the liberation of workmen but of the inmates of gaols. . . . We cannot negotiate with Jewish Communist leaders. . . . There are two worlds. In Bolshevist Russia there is devastation, grim murder, and ruin. Here is laughter, happiness, and beauty."  
—*Nuremberg, September 1936.*

"I do not want to leave any doubt as to the following: We look upon Bolshevism as upon an intolerable danger to the world; we shall try to keep this danger away from the German people by every means at our command; we are therefore endeavouring to make the German people as immune as possible from this contagion. For this it is necessary that we should avoid all close contacts with the bearers of these poisonous bacilli. . . . Any treaty links between Germany and present-day Bolshevist Russia would be without any value whatsoever. . . ."—*Berlin, January 30th, 1937.*

"Germany is a guarantor of peace because she warns all those who from Moscow endeavour to set the world in flames."—*Nuremberg, September 13th, 1937.*

"I refuse most emphatically to be joined with those whose programme is the destruction of Europe and who do not even try to conceal this programme."—*Nuremberg, September 14th, 1937.*

"Shall I remind you of the Bolshevist Revolution which slaughtered millions upon millions of people, but whose blood-

stained murderers still occupy high places? . . . With one single country alone we have detested to enter into relationships. That State is Soviet Russia. We see in Bolshevism more now than before the incarnation of human destructive forces."—*Berlin, February 20th, 1938.*

On August 23rd Herr Forster was declared by decree of the Danzig Senate to be Head of the State of the Free City (*Staatsoberhaupt*). The Polish Government immediately protested and attempted to establish contact with the German Government. The Polish Ambassador in Berlin was unable to secure an interview with the German State Secretary, but saw Field-Marshal Goering, who regretted that "his policy of maintaining friendly relations with Poland should have come to naught, and admitted that he no longer had influence to do much in the matter." The Field-Marshal hinted that Poland should abandon her alliance with Great Britain, and left the Polish Government with the impression that Germany was aiming at a free hand in Eastern Europe.

On August 28th Viscount Halifax informed the Polish Government that in the British reply to Herr Hitler "a clear distinction" would be drawn between "the method of reaching agreement on German-Polish differences and the nature of the solution to be arrived at. As to the method, we [His Majesty's Government] wish to express our clear view that direct discussion on equal terms between the parties is the proper means."

A British note, suggesting direct discussion between the German and Polish Governments, was presented to Herr Hitler by Sir Neville Henderson on August 28th. His Majesty's Government stated they had "already received a definite assurance from the Polish Government that they are prepared to enter into discussions," and that, if such direct discussions led, as they hoped, to agreement, "the way would be open to the negotiation of that wider and more complete understanding between Great Britain and Germany which both countries desire." In his interview of August 28th with Herr Hitler, Sir Neville Henderson repeated the British readiness to reach an Anglo-German understanding, "but only on the basis of a peaceful and freely negotiated solution of the Polish question." Sir Neville Henderson pointed out to Herr Hitler that "it lay with him [Herr Hitler] as to whether he preferred a unilateral solution which would mean war as regards Poland, or British friendship." Herr Hitler, who said that "his Army was ready and eager for battle," would not answer at once whether he would negotiate directly with Poland.

At 7.15 p.m. on August 29th Sir Nevile Henderson received from Herr Hitler the German answer that the German Government was prepared to accept the British proposal for direct German-Polish negotiations in the following terms :

" While the British Government may still believe that these grave differences can be resolved by way of direct negotiations, the German Government unfortunately can no longer share this view as a matter of course. For they have made the attempt to embark on such peaceful negotiations, but, instead of receiving any support from the Polish Government, they were rebuffed by the sudden introduction of measures of a military character in favour of the development alluded to above.

" The British Government attach importance to two considerations : (1) that the existing danger of an imminent explosion should be eliminated as quickly as possible by direct negotiation ; and (2) that the existence of the Polish State, in the form in which it would then continue to exist, should be adequately safeguarded in the economic and political sphere by means of international guarantees.

" On this subject the German Government makes the following declaration :

" Though sceptical as to the prospects of a successful outcome, they are nevertheless prepared to accept the English proposal and to enter into direct discussions. They do so, as has already been emphasized, solely as the result of the impression made upon them by the written statement received from the British Government that they too desire a pact of friendship in accordance with the general lines indicated to the British Ambassador.

" The German Government desire in this way to give the British Government and the British nation a proof of the sincerity of Germany's intentions to enter into a lasting friendship with Great Britain.

" . . . The German Government accordingly, in these circumstances agree to accept the British Government's offer of their good offices in securing the despatch to Berlin of a Polish Emissary with full powers."

But they counted on the arrival of a Polish plenipotentiary on August 30th, the very next day.

The British Ambassador remarked that the latter demand " sounded like an ultimatum."

At 4 p.m. on August 30th Sir Nevile Henderson, on instructions from His Majesty's Government, informed the German Government that it would be " unreasonable to expect the British Government to produce a

Polish representative in Berlin " on that day, and that " the German Government must not expect this."

At midnight the British Ambassador had an interview with Herr von Ribbentrop and handed him the British Government's note reiterating that the method of contact and arrangements for discussion must obviously be agreed with all urgency between the German and Polish Governments, but that it was impossible to establish contact at such short notice. The British Ambassador suggested what normal procedure should be adopted, and that when the German proposals were ready the Polish Ambassador should be invited to call and receive them for transmission to his Government.

Herr von Ribbentrop's reply was to produce a lengthy document, which " he read out in German aloud at top-speed." When His Majesty's Ambassador asked for the text of the proposals in the document, he was told that it was " now too late," as a Polish representative had not arrived in Berlin by midnight (August 30th). Sir Neville Henderson described this procedure as an " ultimatum," in spite of the assurances previously given by the German Government. He asked why Herr von Ribbentrop could not adopt the normal procedure, give him a copy of the German proposals, and ask the Polish Ambassador to call on him (Herr von Ribbentrop) to receive them. " In the most violent terms," reported Sir Neville Henderson, " Herr von Ribbentrop said that he would never ask the Polish Ambassador to visit him," though he hinted that it might be different if the Polish Ambassador asked for an interview.

At 6.30 p.m. on August 31st, after repeated efforts to make contact, M. Lipski, the Polish representative, called upon the German Foreign Minister, and received a copy of the German demands. He was unable to get through to his own Government by telephone, and at dawn on September 1st German forces invaded Poland. No further action towards a settlement by negotiation and the preservation of peace was really possible. Nevertheless, so anxious was the British Government that no effort of theirs should be lacking in the cause of peace, that even after that Herr Hitler was given another chance to reconsider the result of his actions.

After His Majesty's Government had received news of the German invasion of Poland, Viscount Halifax instructed Sir Neville Henderson to inform the German Government that the Governments of the United Kingdom and France considered that the German action had " created conditions (viz. an aggressive act of force against Poland threatening the

independence of Poland) which call for the implementation by the Governments of the United Kingdom and France of the undertaking to Poland to come to her assistance." Unless the German Government suspended all aggressive action against Poland, and promptly withdrew their forces from Polish territory, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would "without hesitation fulfil their obligations to Poland." Sir Nevile Henderson was authorized to explain, if asked, that this communication was "in the nature of a warning," and was "not to be considered as an ultimatum," but Viscount Halifax added, for Sir Nevile Henderson's own information, that "if the German reply is unsatisfactory, the next stage will be either an ultimatum with time-limit or an immediate declaration of war."

On the night of September 1st-2nd Sir Nevile Henderson reported that he had made the necessary communication to Herr von Ribbentrop at 9.30 p.m. and had asked for an immediate answer. Herr von Ribbentrop replied that he would submit the communication to Herr Hitler. Meanwhile, on September 1st the Polish Government announced to His Majesty's Government that, although the Polish Ambassador in Berlin had seen Herr von Ribbentrop at 6.30 on August 31st and had expressed the readiness of the Polish Government to enter into direct negotiations, Polish territory had been invaded, and the Polish Government had therefore been compelled to break off relations with Germany.

Meanwhile the efforts, not only of Great Britain, but of the Pope, Signor Mussolini, the King of the Belgians, the Queen of the Netherlands, and the President of the United States of America had all failed to preserve peace. On Saturday, September 2nd, 1939, the House of Commons met and the Prime Minister reported :

"Sir Nevile Henderson was received by Herr von Ribbentrop at half-past 9 last night, and he delivered the warning message which was read to the House yesterday. Herr von Ribbentrop replied that he must submit the communication to the German Chancellor. Our Ambassador declared his readiness to receive the Chancellor's reply. Up to the present no reply has been received.

"It may be that the delay is caused by consideration of a proposal which, meanwhile, had been put forward by the Italian Government, that hostilities should cease and that there should then immediately be a conference between the five Powers—Great Britain, France, Poland, Germany, and Italy. While appreciating the efforts of the Italian Government, His Majesty's Government, for their part, would find it impossible to take part in a conference

while Poland is being subjected to invasion—her towns are under bombardment, and Danzig is being made the subject of a unilateral settlement by force.

“ His Majesty’s Government will, as stated yesterday, be bound to take action unless the German forces are withdrawn from Polish territory. They are in communication with the French Government as to the limit of time within which it would be necessary for the British and French Governments to know whether the German Government was prepared to effect such a withdrawal. If the German Government should agree to withdraw their forces, then His Majesty’s Government would be willing to regard the position as being the same as it was before the German forces crossed the Polish frontier. That is to say, the way would be open to discussion between the German and Polish Governments on the matters at issue between them on the understanding that the settlement arrived at was one that safeguarded the vital interests of Poland and was secured by an international guarantee. If the German and Polish Governments wished that other Powers should be associated with them in the discussion, His Majesty’s Government for their part would be willing to agree.

“ There is one other matter to which allusion should be made in order that the present situation may be perfectly clear. Yesterday Herr Forster, who on August 23rd had, in contravention of the Danzig constitution, become the head of the State, decreed the incorporation of Danzig in the Reich and the dissolution of the constitution. Herr Hitler was asked to give effect to this decree by German law.

“ At a meeting of the Reich yesterday morning a law was passed for the reunion of Danzig with the Reich. The international status of Danzig as a Free City is established by a treaty of which His Majesty’s Government are a signatory, and the Free City was placed under the protection of the League of Nations. The rights given to Poland in Danzig by treaty are defined and confirmed by agreement concluded between Danzig and Poland.

“ The action taken by the Danzig authorities and the Reichstag yesterday is the final step in the unilateral repudiation of these international instruments which could only be modified by negotiation. His Majesty’s Government do not therefore recognize either the validity of the grounds on which the action of the Danzig authorities was based, the validity of this action itself, or of the effect given to it by the German Government.”

Mr. Greenwood as acting Leader of the Labour Party replied in a great speech which admirably expressed the feelings of the country. Mr. Greenwood said :



"This is indeed a grave moment. I believe the whole House is perturbed by the right hon. gentleman's statement. There is a growing feeling, I believe, in all quarters of the House that this incessant strain must end sooner or later, and, in a sense, the sooner the better. But if we are to march, I hope we shall march in complete unity and march with France.

"I am speaking under very difficult circumstances—with no opportunity to think about what I should say, and I speak what is in my heart at this moment. I am gravely disturbed. An act of aggression took place 36 hours ago. The moment that act of aggression took place, one of the most important treaties of modern times automatically came into operation.

"There may be reasons why instant action was not taken. I am not prepared to say—and I have tried to play a straight game—I am not prepared to say what I would have done had I been one of those sitting on those benches. That delay might have been justifiable, but there are many of us on all sides of this House who view with the gravest concern the fact that hours went by and news came in of bombing operations, and news today of an intensification of it, and I wonder how long we are prepared to vacillate at a time when Britain, and all that Britain stands for, and human civilization are in peril.

"We must march with the French. I think and I hope these words of mine may go further. I do not believe that the French dare, or would dream, at this juncture, of going back on the sacred oaths that they have taken. It is not for me to rouse any kind of suspicion, but if, as the right hon. gentleman has told us, deeply though I regret it, we must await upon our Allies, I should have preferred the Prime Minister to have been able to say tonight definitely: 'It is either peace or war.'

"Tomorrow we meet at 12. I hope the Prime Minister then—well, he must be in a position to make some further statement—and I put this point to him. Every minute's delay now means the loss of life, imperilling our national interests . . . imperilling the very foundations of our national honour, and I hope, therefore, that tomorrow morning, however hard it may be to the right hon. gentleman—and no one would care to be in his shoes tonight—we shall know the mind of the British Government, that there shall be no more devices for dragging out what has been dragged out too long. The moment we look like weakening, on that moment dictatorship knows we are beaten. We are not beaten—we shall not be beaten."

But when Sunday came the Prime Minister had to announce in Parliament :

"When I spoke last night to the House I could not but be aware that in some parts of the House there were doubts and some bewilderment as to whether there had been any weakening, hesitation, or vacillation on the part of His Majesty's Government. In the circumstances I make no reproaches, for if I had been in the same position as hon. members not sitting on this bench and not in possession of all the information which we had, I should very likely have felt the same.

"The statement which I have to make this morning will show that there were no grounds for doubt. We were in consultation all day yesterday with the French Government, and we felt that the intensified action which the Germans were taking against Poland allowed no delay in making our own position clear. Accordingly, we decided to send to our Ambassador in Berlin instructions which he was to hand at 9 o'clock this morning to the German Foreign Secretary and which read as follows :

" ' Sir, in the communication which I had the honour to make to you on September 1, I informed you, on the instructions of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that unless the German Government were prepared to give His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom satisfactory assurances that the German Government had suspended all aggressive action against Poland and were prepared promptly to withdraw their forces from Polish territory, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would, without hesitation, fulfil their obligations to Poland.'

"Although this communication was made more than 24 hours ago no reply has been received, and German attacks upon Poland have been continued and intensified. I have, accordingly, the honour to inform you that unless, not later than 11 a.m. British Summer time, today, September 3, satisfactory assurances to the above effect have been given by the German Government and have reached His Majesty's Government in London, a state of war will exist between the two countries as from that hour.

"That was the final Note. No such undertaking was received by the time stipulated, and, consequently, this country is at war with Germany. I am in a position to inform the House that, according to arrangements made between the British and French Governments, the French Ambassador in Berlin is at this moment making a similar *démarche*, accompanied also by a definite time limit.

"The House has already been made aware of our plans. As I said the other day, we are ready. This is a sad day for all of us—and to none is it sadder than to me. Everything that I have worked for, everything that I have hoped for, everything that I have believed in during my public life, has crashed into ruins.

There is only one thing left for me to do, and that is to devote what strength and powers I have to forwarding the victory of the cause for which we have to sacrifice so much. I cannot tell what part I may be allowed to play myself. I trust I may live to see the day when Hitlerism has been destroyed and a liberated Europe has been re-established."

Thus the avarice and lust for power of a megalomaniac, pandered to by advisers with an equal love of aggrandisement and with the same hectoring characteristics as himself, had led their countrymen into the holocaust and plunged Europe once more into war.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE CIVIL MOBILIZATION OF BRITAIN

BY W. GORDON WILLIAMS

DESPITE the assurances of our preparedness which were given by the Secretary of State for War during the late summer of 1938, it had since been shown that the Munich crisis found us in an alarming state of unreadiness. Although the Premier's visits to Herr Hitler at that time were actuated purely by a real and heartfelt desire for the preservation of peace, the alarms and excursions which they entailed were of great value as a warning both to the British Government and to the British public. It is true that the Army Council had been reorganized and rejuvenated, and that the Territorial Army had been given a definitely better standing than hitherto, with the result that recruitment was proceeding apace, and men to man anti-aircraft guns were flocking to the Standard. Nevertheless, anti-aircraft guns were not there in sufficient numbers, the balloon barrage was by no means yet adequate, and no steps had been taken to provide air-raid shelters. The Munich scare of the late summer of 1938 therefore produced feverish activities in all the big cities, in order to provide places of safety in which the people could take refuge.

It is perhaps fortunate for this country that Herr Hitler gave the dishonest promises that he did, for that enabled us to concentrate on preparedness in the intervening year, with the result that when the blow finally fell and it became inevitable that the Prime Minister's efforts to preserve peace must fail, Britain was in a state of preparedness to an astonishing degree. Trenches which had been hastily begun in September 1938 had been dug deep and roofed in so as to make vast underground areas of protection. Business of all kinds that can only carry on in the big cities had provided their own individual shelters for their staffs and their customers, while those parts of commercial undertakings which could be moved to places of safety in the country provided themselves with accommodation in readiness. In addition to this, all sorts of arrangements for other public shelters were made by the local authorities.

Practically the whole population had been provided with gas-masks and cases in which to keep them, while recruiting for voluntary services in the A.R.P. had brought in fully adequate numbers of workers who were able to be trained in their duties in readiness for war should it come.

In view of the enormous progress in flying and in the aeroplane both as regards speed, navigability, and carrying capacity since the War of 1914, Air Raid Precautions had become a vitally important element in our Defence Services. During the War of 1914 it is estimated that only some 300 tons of bombs were dropped on Great Britain altogether. Modern developments and the vast increase in the number of bombing planes available made it necessary for preparations to be devised against many times that tonnage being delivered in a single day. In the War of 1914 a single flight of aeroplanes came over, dropped their bombs mostly in a rather haphazard way, did what damage they could, and made for home. Modern technique dispatches wave after wave of aeroplane fleets at frequent intervals. On Barcelona, for example, towards the end of the Civil War in Spain, there were no fewer than eighteen raids in thirty-six hours. But tragic as it was, the Spanish Civil War was a small affair compared with a war such as Germany might be expected to wage against the Allies.

It became necessary then that Great Britain should prepare a scheme for the protection of her people and her vital services to meet attacks far transcending anything that had yet been experienced in any part of the world. With this object an Act was passed in March 1937 to make provision for setting up Air Raid Precautions organizations. Under this Act twelve Regional Commissioners were appointed to control ten regions in England, one in Wales, and one in Scotland. These Regional Commissioners were not to function unless and until war should break out. They were, however, to keep in touch with their Regions and make themselves acquainted with the arrangements in progress and the personnel allotted to them by the various Departments of State and the civic authorities. Incidentally, some ten Ministerial offices are closely connected with A.R.P. organizations.

Under the Regional Commissioners twelve expert Regional A.R.P. Inspectors were appointed and twenty-six Divisional Inspectors. By the provisions of the Act the Commissioners were given the complete powers of the central government in the event of communications with the central government being interrupted or delayed, and, of course, much of this power devolves upon their assistants in case of need.

In the main there were three types of known bombs against which precautions had to be taken—the high-explosive, the gas bomb, and the incendiary bomb. The first blows a building down, or makes a large crater in the ground, according to where it falls. Its damage—according to experience in other wars—is very limited in extent and once the bomb has exploded the extent of the damage is known. The gas bomb is local, except in the case of spray gas, and the area round can quickly be detected and dealt with by gas-detecting squads. The third, the incendiary bomb, offers far greater difficulties to overcome. The incendiary bomb burns itself out in perhaps a minute, or explodes according to its type, but it only begins to become effective after this action. Its damage may spread to any lengths, and one such bomb in the fire zone of a great city, such as London, might start a fire which would require half the peacetime resources of the city's Fire Brigade.

With the large number of public utility and other services that are carried on in all the big centres of a country, it is easy to see how extensive and successful air raids could temporarily strangle national existence. And apart from gas and electricity, water, post-office services, railways, and transport, there are, of course, the manufacturing concerns vital to the conduct of war. Something of the extent of this problem as it affects fire precautions may be judged from the fact that in London alone the number of fire pumps were increased from the normal peacetime requirements of 130 pumps by the addition of 3,000 trailer pumps, together with all the gear that goes with them, such as hose, branch pipes, and nozzles, and, of course, the motor-cars to draw them. This, too, entailed the raising of a vast volunteer Fire Service some 30,000 strong with officers, equipment, accommodation, and intensive training by the officers of the London Fire Brigade.

As regards high-explosive bombs, the Government provided the sum of £20 million to give blast-proof and splinter-proof steel shelters and to provide for the reinforcement of basements and ground floors for the protection of 10 million people who, it was estimated, were unable to pay for their own protection.

First-aid detachments, stretcher-bearers, and women drivers were all arranged for, while large numbers had been added to the special constabulary, and circulars of instruction had been issued to the whole British public, advising them what to do in the case of possible air raids, both with regard to warnings, to gas, fire, and other possibilities.

Arrangements had long since been made for the evacuation of school-

children from London and other large industrial areas, and in the few days before war was declared one of the most remarkable pieces of organization, for which in London the L.C.C. were responsible, had resulted in the almost clockwork evacuation of hundreds of thousands of schoolchildren. Voluntary committees in the various safety zones had been set up for reception and disposal of these children and, when necessary, their mothers, with the result that in three days the work was complete.

This was followed by the evacuation of invalids and infirm persons, and the large hospitals throughout the country were, so far as possible, cleared in preparation for the reception of those wounded either directly in the war, or as a result of air-raid casualties.

The medical profession, through the British Medical Council, had already been organized for war service, so that all those doctors and surgeons who had been allocated for war service of various kinds were prepared immediately to take up the posts to which they had been appointed, and arrangements had been made for the carrying on of the general practitioners' practices by such colleagues as it had been decided to maintain in their normal activities.

The first great noticeable result of British preparedness, apart from the trenches to which reference has already been made, was in the preliminary trial black-out which took place on the Thursday before war broke out, for by then the full machinery of the civil defence of Great Britain had been set in motion, and local authorities had been instructed to put air-raid warning system into operation. The sounding of factory sirens and hooters was prohibited, except for the purpose of giving air-raid warnings, and a complete black-out was decreed for the whole kingdom, beginning half an hour after sunset and continuing until half an hour before sunrise. Intense activity was noticeable among the civil population in obliterating any light that might come from their windows, doors, and so forth, so that the glow which is normally to be seen above any big town or city could not be observable from above, and lights on motor vehicles were ordered to be reduced to a minimum, the use of all headlights being forbidden.

Instructions were sent to local authorities to set up emergency committees, for which arrangements had already been made, and to local A.R.P. controllers to take up their duties, thereby setting up the system of communication and control, based on regional organization, for which provision had already been made. Local authorities were instructed to

complete the distribution of civilian respirators where this had not so far been completed, and to protect essential A.R.P. buildings. At the same time, they were given authority to requisition such premises as they might think necessary for civil defence purposes and for public shelters, and the covered trenches which had already been completed were to be opened up preparatory for immediate use, while authority was also given for the requisitioning of such vehicles as they might think fit.

Arrangements had already been made in many cases, between organizations of employers and employed, for the dilution of labour where it was thought—as in the engineering trade—that this might become necessary.

The Control of Employment Bill, which was designed to meet this purpose, was accepted in principle by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress. One of the main ideas of the Bill was to prevent an employer, except with the consent of the Minister of Labour, from publishing any advertisement stating that he desired to engage any employee to whom the order might apply, and that such an employer should not engage or re-engage any such employee unless the consent of the Minister had been obtained. Such an order might apply to all employers or to specific employers or classes of employers, and similarly to all employees or specified employees or classes of employees. The intention was, of course, to prevent non-essential work drawing men away from essential national work, and the powers given to the Minister to prevent transfers to non-essential work were comprehensive. The expression "advertisement" included any notices, circular, or other document.

The personnel for labour and industry in wartime is naturally as important in its spheres as the personnel for the fighting Services. A new economy had to be established. Every man taken into the fighting Forces ceases to be a producer or carrier, and becomes a consumer of costly materials and a user of expensive transport. War requires enormously powerful industrial as well as financial sinews. Every army demands industrial support, and a mechanized army, an air force, and a navy must have large-scale manufacturing power behind them. The fighting Forces are, therefore, in rivalry with industry for man-power, and the organization of a nation for war must include, as vitally important, the organization of the industrial forces which supply the fighting Services with munitions, equipment, stores, and food.

The allocation of man-power is, therefore, a single problem rather



than a series of departmental ones. The fighting Services must be maintained, but so also must their supplies. Vast effort was needed to provide the necessary number during the War of 1914, but an even greater effort was required in the War of 1939, for mechanized forces necessitate a huge number of skilled and semi-skilled men.

The experience of the War of 1914 and knowledge of the demands which war preparations were making on industry were decisive reasons for the preparation of a schedule of reserved occupations, and the publication of a schedule at the beginning of 1939 was a usefully direct method of informing the public of the necessity for a man-power plan which would keep in due relation the requirements of the war front and of what came to be known in the War of 1914 as the home front. No one needs to be told that every increase of the Air Force has required, and always must require, a corresponding industrial expansion and an earmarking of man-power for the aircraft industry. The expansion of the Navy had similar effects on the shipbuilding industry and marine engineering, and the mechanization of the Army likewise called for the retention in the engineering industry of the men who can make the requisite machines and tools. At the same time the Services have to enlist large numbers of mechanics to maintain the machines which are the modern implements of war. Men skilled in trades are as indispensable in the Services as in industry. The most noticeable change in the attitude of our rulers towards the War of 1939, in contrast with the attitude of Governments towards any other war, was that this would be a struggle of industry and resources. In the War of 1914 the world had learnt that modern international conflicts were in the fullest sense international; that they were, in fact, wars between whole nations, and therefore, with the existence of extensive modern frontier fortifications, the effective organization of production might be at least as important a factor as the contribution of fighting man-power.

It is said, indeed, that the earliest plan of the Allies, discussed long before war actually broke out, was for Britain to contribute only a Navy and an Air Force, while France took care of land operations. There was to be no British Expeditionary Force, no vast organization of British men in arms. The man-power was instead to be devoted to the production of supplies for carrying on the war. This plan proved unworkable, however, and instead a compromise was effected. Britain was to promulgate an extensive schedule of reserved occupations, the men engaged in which would be excluded from military service, while France was to

mobilize in the usual way. Then if, as was hoped, the Maginot Line could be held with a minimum of soldiers, France would introduce gradual measures of partial demobilization. In this way both the military and the industrial responsibilities of the war would be shared equally by the two partners.

The industrial mobilization of the country was based on a National Register. The complexity of the problem of fitting 45 million round pegs into an equal number of round holes would have been impossible but for accurate data concerning every individual domiciled in the country, and aliens as well as British subjects were required to complete forms far more detailed than those of any previous census. Every individual was provided with an identity card, designed to help the police or other Government officials and to aid in the identification of air-raid casualties. The organization of the Register had been completed before the outbreak of war by the office of the Registrar-General in Somerset House, in compliance with the urgency of a group in Parliament led by Sir Edward Grigg and Mr. L. S. Amery, and the country was divided into 65,000 districts, each with an enumerator. The enumerators were themselves ostensibly chosen as men of considerable tact, largely from the ranks of life-insurance salesmen and men of similar occupations accustomed to dealing directly with the public.

Each enumerator had to deal with between two and three hundred families, and it was estimated that it would require an average of only three days to explain to each household what had to be done, to impress on them the necessity for exact and detailed information concerning occupations, and to collect the completed forms.

The remainder of the work was finished in a fortnight. Every man, woman, and child in the country was tabbed and given a number. The numbers were composed of three serials representing the district, the number of forms to be distributed in that district, and the "family number" of the individual determined by the particular line of the form on which each member's name was written.

The whole scheme was placed in the competent hands of Sir Sylvanus Vivian, the Registrar-General, who had been in charge of food rationing during the War of 1914, and who had a brilliant mathematical ability which would well grasp and advise on the statistical problems involved.

The Register completed, it was the task of the Registrar-General's department to summarize the results and pass them on to the various other Government departments concerned. Food rationing, for instance,

could not even be considered in detail until the exact proportions and numbers of different classes in the community became known, for, obviously, no maximum allowances of food could be fixed until the population of the country was ascertained and it was known among how many people a given quantity of any commodity would have to be shared. Again, it would be very rash to fix a limit on, say, foods consumed largely by children unless the exact numbers of children in the appropriate age-groups were known.

The second great movement of war mobilization was the evacuation movement, to which brief reference has already been made. A mass migration, with its attendant problems of housing, feeding, clothing, and education, was carried out smoothly in three days. The L.C.C. alone, in co-operation with the surrounding boroughs of reception areas, entrained more than 750,000 children and sent them out of the danger area.

The children met at their schools at an appointed time, often before dawn, and were marched or transported to the stations under the supervision of their teachers. In some cases the parties were as large as a thousand, but in most cases they were easily manageable. In spite of the relief from an organizing point of view of voluntary helpers, and the reduction of pressure caused by the fact that many fifteen-year-old boys had joined up as messengers for the Auxiliary Fire Service, there were bound to be certain dislocations in the reception areas. It is difficult without previous experience to make a completely accurate estimate of the requirements after a journey of a given number of children in, for instance, rugs and food. Besides, supplies were lacking, and the organizers were forced to ask for loans from the public. But it is sufficient testimony to the extreme efficiency of the organization to say that there was not one accident, apart perhaps from a child whose nose started to bleed.

Evacuation hit the medical services of the great towns hardest, for it was obviously imperative that the hospitals should be cleared for the reception of air-raid casualties. Thousands of patients were evacuated in ambulances, single-deck buses, milk-carts, and any other vehicles which could possibly be rendered suitable. Each patient left his town with his name, address, and medical history attached in an envelope, while special care was taken that the evacuation should not interfere with the supply of necessary medicines to patients at the right time; a new-born baby was, for instance, dispatched from St. Bartholomew's to the country with special bottles of milk.

Necessary as the evacuation was, it left the towns without adequate civilian medical facilities. Hospitals for entry into which it had previously been necessary to be put on a waiting list now lay empty, attending only to black-out casualties. Many large hospitals found themselves without any lying-in patients at all, while their out-patients list was cut to half and a considerable staff of doctors and nurses remained in attendance. Very soon after the outbreak of the war, for example, St. Mary's Hospital, Stratford, E., found itself with about forty patients, cared for by a staff of twenty-six doctors and ninety-six nurses. The difficulty was not only that the town hospitals could not afford to fill their beds for fear that air raids might catch them unprepared, but also that many of the classes from whom they were accustomed to draw a large percentage of their patients were evacuated, and could not be treated in the evacuation areas owing to the inevitably inadequate medical capabilities of country districts and small provincial towns. Doctors were not competent to challenge the wisdom of what was in effect a military decision, but the fact remained that the care of the sick in London and the great towns was in jeopardy, and that the training of medical students, more necessary than ever in wartime, was suffering accordingly.

Such dislocations were in no way the fault of the authorities. They were unavoidable. Often the choice was between abandoning action altogether and acting in a manner contrary to previously decided lines of policy. Such a case was that of religious education of evacuated children. The policy approved by the Ministry of Education for elementary schools was to leave religious instruction to the parents themselves, thus ensuring that no views should be taught to children which ran contrary to parents' wishes. With the break-up of large numbers of families owing to evacuation, there was often, as a result, no one to give the child any religious instruction at all, and religious education suffered considerably.

The Government announced that while it encouraged evacuation whenever possible, there would, none the less, be a comprehensive pension scheme to deal with air-raid casualties similar to the pension schemes of the fighting Services. There were to be three classes: Army, Navy, and Air Force; air-raid wardens and other civilians acting in an official capacity; and ordinary civilians. Unemployment would be covered, and the only exceptions were to be those already living at Government expense or on private incomes.

As a result of the evidence of the National Register and a survey of the food situation, the Minister of Food, Mr. W. S. Morrison, announced

that the general situation was so good that there would be no need to introduce rationing immediately. Butter and bacon might be more scarce than in peacetime, but the ration, when it came, would be, he said, none the less ample for moderate family needs. It was, in fact, to be a security against waste and extravagance rather than an attempt to distribute small stocks efficiently. How far this view was likely to prove accurate or otherwise remained to be seen, but Mr. Morrison did at that time assure the country over the wireless that there was no possibility of a recurrence of the food queues of the War of 1914.

The Ministry of Food went farther, encouraging the growth of more food at home and enforcing a strict control of the prices of milk, tea, bread, meat, flour, margarine, and cooking fats. In order to encourage production they placed the possibility of renting a million new allotments before the public, ensuring that these commitments would be as easily made as possible by charging only nominal rents and supplying prospective tenants with cheap tools and seeds.

The whole scheme was worked out by the Ministries of Food, Agriculture, and Education, under Mr. Morrison, Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith, and Earl de la Warr. If, however, the Government was so anxious to place the production of food on such a high level of activity immediately following the outbreak of hostilities, one is forced to ask why they had not taken steps to do so sooner, since the production of food at home can obviously do no harm to the national economy, and its necessity as a defence measure was automatically recognized by the Government's action. The complaints of farmers and of many other sections had been raised for a period of years against the inability of the Ministry of Agriculture to take this obvious and important step.

This Ministry was particularly at fault, considering that allotment production is the most uneconomic method of food production which it is possible to have. If the extra acres had been leased in peacetime to professional farmers at the same nominal rentals, not only would Britain have produced more food for storage and consumption, but it would in addition have produced more food to the acre. In the first place, allotment holders cannot possibly have the skill and knowledge of professionals, and in the second they are unable to introduce modern methods of farming and horticulture because they are not worth it for a small space of land. There are chemicals, for instance, the purchase and use of which will show the agriculturist a considerable profit over an area of several acres, but which cannot reasonably be employed on half an acre

of land cultivated by an amateur which has probably never been tilled before. If the farmers had been allowed to rent these allotments at the same nominal prices, but in better time, they could, so to speak, have taken them in their stride, giving them the attention which they were bestowing anyway on their regular holdings.

Rationing must obviously apply also to those articles of which the Government is likely in wartime to be the chief consumer, such as petrol, fuel, and electricity. By an Order in Council the quarterly consumption of coal, gas, and electricity by domestic and small industrial consumers was limited to 75 per cent. of the quantity consumed in the corresponding quarter of the year ended June 30th. Consumers of more than two tons of coal during that year were ordered to register with a licensed coal dealer, and after October the supply of coal was to be refused to them if they had not so registered. Consumers of less than two tons of coal were not to be rationed, but would need a certificate from the local fuel overseer.

The same standard of 75 per cent. applied to gas and electricity, but householders using less than 100 therms of gas and 200 units of electricity were not to be rationed. Owners of electric cookers were given a special ration of 1,000 units.

Petrol rationing was to operate from September 16th, from which date only one grade of motor petrol was to be issued. This petrol was a blend of previously existing makes, called Pool motor spirit, and was to be priced originally at 1s. 6d. a gallon. Two ration books were issued, one from September 16th to October 15th, the other from October 16th to November 15th, and could be obtained at post offices or local taxation offices on production of car registration books. These contained coupons according to the horse-power of the vehicle.

It seemed a very large imposition on the country that the wages for whole-time A.R.P. volunteers should threaten to cost the country £10 million more than the pay of the Army and £27 million more than the pay of the Royal Air Force for 1938. The situation was regarded as particularly burdensome considering the large numbers of voluntary A.R.P. workers whose average efficiency was just as great as that of their comrades at £3 a week, but whose cost to the country was practically negligible.

It seemed essential from the point of view of expenditure to bring in some measure of partial civil demobilization, and the Treasury asked for a halt to be called to the soaring figures. Economists pointed out that

A.R.P. organizations would absorb a large proportion of the funds collected by increased taxation. London was paying its Auxiliary Fire Service volunteers alone a sum of no less than £70,000 a week, while Birmingham spent £18,000 a week in wages to A.R.P. workers, and Leeds, with 4,000 paid workers, £11,000 a week.

At the same time the Government felt that it would be mistaken in its estimate of the character of the German rulers if it assumed immunity from air attack. It might even be inviting bombing raids if they were to undertake a large-scale reduction in their staffs. Besides, the war had broken out late in the year, as the season for modern wars goes, and it might prove difficult to reassemble personnel quickly if the return of good flying weather brought concomitant raids. Finally, it was well known from publication and utterances of individuals in Germany on whom much of the task of planning the campaigns rested, that air attack was considered in that country as one of the most effective forms of aggressive warfare. It was felt that German industry had not been working day and night on bombing planes for nothing. Quite apart from any idea of a *Blitzkrieg*, only air attack could disorganize British industry, on the superiority of which, both as regards supplies and efficiency, the victory of the Allies mainly rested in the long run.

Evacuation was not without its social side in addition to the financial problems already indicated. The first effect, considering the black-out, the shortage of cinemas and their prohibition from late opening, was a revival of reading, and the public libraries at once felt the difference. After the stillness of the first few days, lending steadily revived, often reaching a figure 25 per cent. above the pre-war level. Two cities did not share the increase. They were significantly Birmingham and Bradford, Birmingham's issues being 23 per cent. lower than the figures for the corresponding period in the previous year. Bradford suffered a decline both in the number of borrowers and in the volume of books borrowed, but in both these cases there was a ready explanation. From the start they were areas of intense industrial activity. Workers to a considerable extent spent their former leisure hours working overtime at the factories and workshops. They were, therefore, left with less time within which to read. On the whole, the nature of the literature read was of a more serious type, unlike the cinemas and theatres, though the effect of the war on reading is in many respects difficult to estimate. Librarians agreed that what had been popular before the war remained popular at the outset of it, fiction, of course, still leading by a long way.

But biography, books of travel and history, remained as popular as ever, while the demand for the more serious and more lengthy type of novel increased considerably. The effect of the new conditions was seen in the response to legislation as books on A.R.P., first aid, vegetable gardens, and allotments rose following the topicality of these subjects.

The obvious parallels between so many of the events of the War of 1939 and that of 1914 were responsible for the considerable increase of the demand for books dealing with the last Great War. Crisis after crisis had increased the interest too in books dealing with international affairs, and extra copies of Streit's *Union Now* had to be bought in Bolton. This book was the most popular of its kind in Manchester and Leeds as well, but it was only representative of a considerable demand for books of this nature. On the other hand, the documents published by the Government on the outbreak of the war met with little demand, but this may be explained on the grounds that many would prefer to have copies of their own rather than to borrow them from a library.

Not unnaturally, *Mein Kampf* was the first choice of modern political works. The popularity of Herr Hitler's statement of his aims had risen steadily in the last two years, and increased sharply when the new and unexpurgated edition was published in England, but on the outbreak of war the waiting lists for it in public libraries grew quite exceptional and there was demand for the German version as well.

On the whole, reading did more than many people thought possible to replace and even improve on the lighter pleasures of life so suddenly removed.

We have already mentioned the schedule of reserved occupations; but its publication at the beginning of 1939 did more than clarify the minds of the Government departments concerned, or about to be concerned, in the organization of man-power. It was also an extremely useful and direct method of informing the public that the war would not be waged only on Continental soil. It was an indication that what had come to be known as the Home Front in the War of 1914 would be considered from the outbreak of the next war as a recognized front of established importance. The publication of the schedule epitomized the modern industrial outlook on war. In 1914 the feeling that war was something for professional soldiers had still been strong: before the War of 1939 was ever upon us the Government had shown that they realized to what extent a modern struggle would be a struggle in the efficient mobilization and utilization of all the possible resources and man-power.



The criticisms of the traditionalists came thick, fast, and ill-considered. They resented such reservations from military service as that of university teachers, forgetting the tremendous part played in intelligence and other organizations by the best-trained brains in the country, forgetting too the numbers of such men who, in the last war, had had to be called back from the Front, and the wastage of human material, and lastly forgetting that in wartime it is of supreme importance that first-rate scholars and scientists should continue to be turned out by the universities. This case was not in itself of supreme importance, though the Government was hampered in its previous decision to use as many first-class academic brains as possible in Government service. It was, however, of importance in so far as it so well illustrated the narrow-mindedness and shortsightedness of sections of the Press and public opinion which allowed themselves to be blinded by outmoded notions of "gallantry," instead of realizing that the question is not, "Why should not university dons be exposed to the same dangers as anybody else?" but "In what capacity are university dons likely to be of most service to the national effort?"

We have chosen this case to illustrate our argument because here there can be no question of technical points. If one disputes, say, the possible reservation of plumbers on the grounds that in the event of air bombardment a good many pipes will be burst, one disputes it on technical grounds. The questions to be answered are, "Can A.R.P. workers be trained in a short enough time to do the job properly?" "Will enough pipes be burst to justify such a wholesale reservation?" etc., etc. But in the case of university teachers these technical questions of men to take their place do not arise. Quite apart from the obvious desirability of refusing to allow the war to interfere with the higher education of the whole generation concerned, the exemption or non-exemption of dons is an entirely utilitarian problem.

In some cases the necessity for reservation was obvious, and met with no opposition. No one needed to be told, for instance, that every expansion of the Air Force required a commensurate expansion in the aircraft industry, and therefore that not only must these workers have a place on the schedule, but that it would be necessary in addition to earmark for eventual employment all those whose skill, now otherwise employed, could be diverted to the production of aeroplanes. The expansion of the Navy had similar effects on the shipbuilding industry and marine engineering, and the mechanization of the Army likewise called for the retention

in the engineering industry of the men who can make machines. At the same time the Services had to enlist large numbers of mechanics to maintain the machines which are the modern implements of war. Men in skilled trades are as indispensable in the Services as in industry.

But the failure of many sections of opinion to realize this principle in full was well illustrated by their attitude to such reservations as that of company secretaries over thirty years old. Everyone agreed that the trade of the country must go on, playing the vital part it does in the ability of the country to stand taxation and to accumulate foreign currency, quite apart from its effect on the morale of the people. Yet the reservation of these few company secretaries met with considerable opposition. The reason for the reservation was plain. When much of a firm's staff has in any case been surrendered to the Services, one man remains indispensable—the secretary of the company, who inevitably has his eye on every department, and whose financial advice is pre-eminently valuable in the difficult circumstances of war. The number of company secretaries is not vast, and it would therefore help commerce as a whole very greatly if they were exempted, while the loss to the armed Forces would be slight. On the whole, it was considered, and rightly so, that these men would be more useful to the country where they were. It is hard in these circumstances to find a logical reconciliation in the attitude of those who screamed "Business as usual" on the one hand, and on the other bitterly opposed the reservations necessary to make "Business as usual" at all possible.

Perhaps this opposition would not have been so hysterical had there not been the constant fear that reservations and the need for civilian defence would absorb so many men that the numbers of the armed Forces themselves would be inadequate. In this many seemed to forget the tremendous resources in man-power of the French Republic. Still, it was true that fire-fighting corps, first-aid parties, demolition and decontamination squads, and special constabulary all require men physically fit, and a considerable proportion must be of military age. The peacetime training of these units did not take the men from their ordinary callings; it was a part-time duty. Wartime requirements were more stringent and could be met only by the full-time service of a large number, if not the whole, of the men who had volunteered for such duties. In this connexion it is true that the opposition to various aspects of the schedule of reserved occupations died down as it became evident

that large numbers of A.R.P. workers were to be released, owing to the lack of air raids, and following the Government statement that these men could not be promised exemption from military service. At the same time, the more cynical may have wondered whether the topic of opposition to the schedule had not died the natural death of all such campaigns when they failed any longer to be of news value.

National Service also makes large calls on women, though the availability of women in industry is only comparatively slightly affected thereby. The reason for this is, of course, that National Service takes more women from the household than it does from industry. In the first place, there are more women normally engaged at home than there are in offices and factories: in the second, the financial motive is stronger for housewives and similarly occupied women than it is for women already earning wages. Besides, there is always a very great reserve of women ready to be called upon by industry if the need arises. There are more women than men in the population, yet in 1914 there were rather more than 10,600,000 men and boys in employment as compared with only 3,277,000 women and girls. In November 1918 the number of employed males had declined to 8,163,000, while the number of females had increased to 4,940,000. In other words, there were approximately 2,400,000 fewer men and boys in employment and 1,660,000 more women and girls. In the War of 1914 over a million women went into munitions or commercial works, while local government services absorbed nearly 200,000. Nursing occupied many thousands of women, and the number enrolled for one or other of the women's auxiliary services was about 90,000. It is significant that half the women who undertook industrial or commercial work abandoned employment within eighteen months of the Armistice. This means that a large reserve can be considered as a genuine source of war recruitment, who will contribute their effort while it is needed, but who are on the whole willing to be disbanded in the event of peace.

As *The Times* Labour Correspondent so ably pointed out, preparations for war had already made great changes in British industry before the outbreak of hostilities. Over a period of months and years there had been a concentration of labour in the armament industries. In the aircraft section of engineering, which is closely connected technically with the motor-manufacturing industry, there was little excess, and it was imperative to build up this branch of engineering as rapidly as possible. In the Ministry of Labour's statistics the motor-vehicle, cycle, and aircraft industries are grouped together, as the labour is broadly interchangeable.

The growth of employment in them in the years prior to the War of 1939 was remarkable. Between 1927 and 1938 the number of workpeople (sixteen years of age and over) in motor and aircraft manufacture increased by nearly 158,000. From 1923, when 192,000 workpeople were engaged in these industries, there was a steady expansion right up to the early thirties, and then a rapid development.

Taking 1923 as the basic year (100), the employment in the three related industries in the five years before the outbreak of war in 1939 increased as follows :

1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
143.2	150.8	165.6	185.5	204.6

The numerical increase in the year 1937-8 exceeded 23,000, and a further expansion occurred in the following twelve months under the impulse, in the main, of the demand for aircraft, but with the requirements of the Army and the Navy for internal-combustion engines as a supporting influence. The growing number of workpeople does not, however, give the full measure of the increase of productive capacity, for the organization of production had changed and something approaching mass-production methods had been attained.

The agreement between the engineering employers and the A.E.U. for the "dilution of skilled labour" was a proof that the skilled labour of the industry was unequal to the demands which the increased programme of production put upon it. While trade-union rights were safeguarded, and the necessity for dilution had to be shown in every case, the agreement prepared the way for using semi-skilled men to do part of a skilled man's work under his supervision and for putting semi-skilled men on machines that had hitherto been operated only by the skilled. These arrangements, which enable skill to go farther and do more, were accepted as necessary for peacetime emergency conditions. With the outbreak of war the demands for the supplementing of the skilled labour of the industry became still more insistent.

The requirements of the aircraft, the general engineering, and the shipbuilding industries are conspicuous examples of the necessity for the planning of man-power which had been undertaken in the schedule of reserved occupations. But, of course, the essential wartime demands on industry extended much farther. The clothing and boot-making industries made a direct contribution to military needs, and the multiplicity of wants for the armed Forces spread far and wide. Moreover, there were

the primary industries behind the manufacturing industries—coal and iron-ore mining being two—and all of them must be given their right strength in labour unless the military effort itself were to suffer. It must never be forgotten, either, that farming is an essential industry for the maintenance of the national effort in war. Even while the requirements of the armed Forces must be given precedence, it is essential to maintain the life of the nation.

Theatres and cinemas were provisionally ordered to be closed, and the Stock Exchange Committee also decided, for the first day or two, anyway, that the institution should cease operations. But within a few days it was realized that people would continue to demand entertainment, and after the first rush of the new essential preparations had begun to slow down permission was given for the reopening of certain places of entertainment at limited times, and on conditions that adequate provision had been made for coping with their audiences in the event of a raid.

Meantime concerts and entertainments were arranged for the troops, but the rest of the community was left to rely for its relaxation on the attenuated efforts of the B.B.C. Most of the usual stations were suspended so far as this purpose was concerned. Two only were maintained—the Northern and Scottish Regionals.

The public, of course, were quite reconciled to this and fully realized the necessity for curtailment of the choice of programmes in the national emergency. On the other hand, discontent was expressed on all sides over the fact that these two operating stations gave exactly the same programmes, and very indifferent ones at that. All contracts with forthcoming performers had been cancelled and a small band of entertainers of varying qualities had been engaged for the duration of the war. As a result there was a lamentable sameness about the entertainments and a disproportionate number of gramophone records programmes.

This was deemed to be unfair both on the public, who are wireless licence-holders, and on that great army of musicians and artists whose livelihood on the public platform had gone and who might have expected at least some support from the B.B.C. After all, presumably the number of licences was not diminished to any appreciable extent. In that case the income of the B.B.C. remained at its former level. It would seem, therefore, that the B.B.C. should have been able to ease the lot of a number of hard-hit artists by giving them employment and at the same time keep faith with the millions of licence-holders.



# BRITAIN'S FIRST WAR CABINET, 1939

*Standing, left to right :* THE RT. HON. SIR JOHN ANDERSON, THE RT. HON. LORD HANKLY, THE RT. HON. LESLIE HORE-BELSHA, THE RT. HON. WILSON CHURCHILL, THE RT. HON. SIR KINGSLEY WOOD, THE RT. HON. ANTHONY EDEN, SIR EDWARD BRIDGES  
*Front Row, left to right :* THE RT. HON. VISCOUNT HALIFAX, THE RT. HON. SIR JOHN SIMON, THE RT. HON. NI VILL CHAMBERLAIN, THE RT. HON. SIR SAMUEL HOARE, ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET THE RT. HON. LORD CROMPTON



Meantime a War Cabinet of nine was instituted, consisting of the following :

*Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury*

MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

*Chancellor of the Exchequer*

SIR JOHN SIMON

*Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs*

LORD HALIFAX

*Minister for Co-ordination of Defence*

ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET LORD CHATFIELD

*First Lord of the Admiralty*

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL

*Secretary of State for War*

MR. LESLIE HORE-BELISHA

*Secretary of State for Air*

SIR KINGSLEY WOOD

*Lord Privy Seal*

SIR SAMUEL HOARE

*Minister without Portfolio*

LORD HANKEY

The leaders of the Liberal and Labour Parties were invited to join the Government, as in the case of the War of 1914. These latter, however, very wisely decided to sacrifice any possible personal and party benefit on the grounds that they could be of greater service to the country, and to the Government, by remaining independent, than by being absorbed into the Government itself.

Parliament began to evolve a new technique. In view of the nature of the war—democracies against “totalitarianism”—members felt that it was specially important that in this country Parliament should continue to function effectively.

There was general agreement with the point made by Mr. Arthur Greenwood in the House, that members outside the Government, of whatever party, should reflect and interpret public opinion. If this is done with a real sense of responsibility, it is a help to the Government. The regular surveys by the Prime Minister of the progress of the war provided opportunity for constructive criticism and helpful suggestion. On motions for the adjournment important debates could take place. Finally, there was the maintenance of question time, and its extension to Friday sittings.



It is perhaps necessary to point out here the nature of the British Parliamentary control. In most countries an Opposition considers it its duty to oppose at all times, and there is usually little friendliness between the members of one party and another. In the British Parliament it is no unusual thing to find members of opposing parties the best of friends, however hostile they may seem in the House. Even politically, it is easy to have a friendly "Opposition" rather than a hostile one, which, by its criticisms, questions, and suggestions from outside the Government, can often do much to help the Government, both in airing possible grievances of the public and stimulating it to the greatest heights of activity.

Within the first week of the war, no fewer than forty Bills were passed by the House of Commons—a phenomenal number, which could only have been passed by the free and frank co-operation of the Opposition parties. This remarkable number of Bills also affords further evidence of the really astounding preparations that had previously been made. Obviously all these measures were "on the stocks" in their different Government departments, and held in readiness for immediate introduction should war break out. (A list of these forty Bills and their main purposes appears at the end of this chapter.)

Five hundred million pounds were voted by Parliament for the immediate necessities of carrying on the war pending the introduction of the first wartime Budget.

Wartime finance requires obviously special provisions, not only for the Government, but for, and by, the public. It is interesting to note, however, the calmness with which the public met the commencement of the conflict. At the beginning of the War of 1914 banks were closed for several days for financial reasons, and the Stock Exchange for several months. On the declaration of war in 1939 banks closed for one day only without any financial purpose, but purely to effect the completion of their safety removal measures, while the Stock Exchange reopened after the first few days.

On August 24th the Bank rate was raised from 2 per cent. to 4 per cent., and instead of the introduction of the paper money to which we had become accustomed during the last quarter of a century postal orders were put into circulation as legal tender. There was, however, a far smaller withdrawal of cash by the general public than at the beginning of the War in 1914. Partly, no doubt, owing to the fact that most people who could had taken the advice given in Parliament some months previously to stock a reasonable though not excessive store cupboard.



LEADER OF THE LABOUR PARTY  
THE RT. HON. C. R. ATTLEE

WS. 4]



LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY  
THE RT. HON. SIR ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR  
LEADERS OF HIS MAJESTY'S OPPOSITION



DEPUTY-LEADER OF THE LABOUR PARTY  
THE RT. HON. A. GREENWOOD



Meantime, with the exception of £100,000, the gold held by the Bank of England was handed over to the Government so that the gold backing to the note circulation was less than  $\frac{1}{4}d.$  in the pound, and private ownership of foreign credits and securities was ordered to be held at the disposal of the Government for purchase by it.

Arrangements which had previously been prepared for the regulation and price control of basic commodities were issued. Cases of profiteering are, of course, inevitable by the few when the opportunity occurs, and to prevent it a system of price control was introduced in the cases of many commodities. It was, however, early discovered that this did not cover a sufficiently wide field, and since profiteering in any shape or form is against the national interests and unfair both on the consumer and on the more honest trader, the Government decided to take full power to deal with any cases that might arise.

Schemes for the insurance of goods of agriculturists and traders were proclaimed. This insurance was compulsory in the case of goods exceeding £1,000 and voluntary for traders who carried stocks of less than this value.

As already pointed out, provisions were made for the rationing of food and petrol. From the experiences of the War of 1914 it had, of course, all along been realized that this rationing would inevitably take place, but the Government wisely decided to be ready for a war lasting three years or even longer—in case this should be necessary—rather than allow people (as in the case of the War of 1914) to believe complacently that “it would all be over by Christmas.” Local food committees had, therefore, been set up in readiness, and the rationing arrangements devised; but with evacuation schemes and the extensive removal of various sections of the population, it was clearly inadvisable to begin rationing until the country had had sufficient time to settle down to war conditions, and it could be judged to what extent supplies of various commodities would be needed in the different parts of the country.

The idea behind rationing does not necessarily imply immediate scarcity of food. Indeed, it should be mentioned that during the two years preceding the outbreak of war the Government spent many millions of pounds in the purchase of foodstuffs for storage in the event of hostilities breaking out. It is, however, inevitable that in a war a country like Great Britain, which imports such a large percentage of its food, should, in the early days at least, lose a certain amount of goods that have been dispatched to her, as a result of naval operations and the U-boat sinking

of merchant ships. Therefore, it was obviously necessary that reasonable care should be taken to avoid unnecessary waste, and the unreasonable stocking of large and unfair supplies by the richer households, which might perhaps react unfairly on the poorer, had to be prevented.

A Military Service Act had already been passed, at the end of April 1938, so that the question of calling up various age-groups, as and when required, was facilitated and the military authorities could summon such numbers as they could adequately cope with, from time to time.

Regulations were instituted for the priority of work, to enable the Government to demand that any Government work of vital importance should be carried out before private contracts.

A Ministry of Supply had already been set up earlier, and was in full activity, and a Ministry of Information, for which the organization had previously been made, was immediately instituted. The dropping of leaflets from the air over Germany by British aeroplanes on the very first day of the war was, in fact, evidence that the Ministry of Information had at least been operating as a nucleus in readiness for the beginning of hostilities, for, clearly, large numbers of these must have been printed before the war began.

But in other ways the Ministry of Information—which in the early days had some measure of control over the Department of Propaganda in Enemy Countries—was immediately found wanting. A vast staff of inexperienced people was put in the charge of even more inexperienced directors. The psychology of the nation was shown at once to be totally misunderstood, with the result that, practically speaking, all news and all information were withheld until it had reached the public from other—usually foreign—sources through the Press. Events known throughout Fleet Street for a week or more which had percolated through to the bulk of the public and were almost forgotten were released and given over the wireless as though they were fresh news. The sinking of any particular ship was announced so many times for so many days that each ship appeared as several. The limit was reached when the news of British Forces in France was announced over the French wireless, released in Great Britain, and then, after being set up in the papers was suppressed at the instigation of one Minister, only to be released again an hour later.

As Lord Camrose said the following week in the House of Lords :

What had happened up to now had not given any great satisfaction to newspapers or newspaper agencies.

A huge machine had been created on ordinary bureaucratic lines and filled with Civil Servants of all kinds in key positions.

"Not only is there a Director-General, but a Deputy Director-General, Directors, and Deputy Directors, in all thirteen or fourteen, and we are wondering what all these people are going to do. There is an Advisory Council of twenty-two members, and that Council, I understand, has not yet met. The whole thing has been conceived on a scale which has amazed those whose everyday business it is to handle problems of the kind which are entrusted to the Ministry of Information."

Lord Camrose referred to the censorship of the news that British soldiers were in France, and added :

"The House will be interested to know that the same news which caused this now-celebrated blunder was first submitted to the Ministry on Friday of last week. It was then passed for publication and appeared in the earlier editions of the newspapers. One hour later peremptory orders were given for its suppression, and the only difference from what happened on Monday night was that the police were not asked to go to the newspaper offices. The fact that there were British soldiers in France was known all over the world on Friday night. It must be admitted that every new department is bound to make mistakes ; but it is the likelihood of their recurrence which matters. That is the danger. My contention, and that of the newspaper Press as a whole, is that so long as the Ministry is staffed and controlled as it is now, you will continue to have those errors of judgment and misunderstandings which have hampered not only our own newspapers, but the representatives of papers in America and all important neutral countries. Broadly speaking, the business and duties of the Ministry of Information constitute work which is being undertaken all the time in the newspaper offices of the country. What has been attempted up to now is to do this with a large staff of people who have had no previous experience of any kind whatsoever. The results achieved are similar to those which you would expect if you tried to run a battleship with a regiment of soldiers. That is the reason for all these delays and censorship decisions which have caused universal trouble. The censorship was being conducted in such a way as to cause larger and unnecessary costs to the international news agencies, thereby seriously injuring the proper flow of reliable news from this country and opening the way to enemy propaganda, which was being pumped through every available source.

"In another place yesterday," said Lord Camrose, "the Lord

Privy Seal said they were getting more journalists into the Ministry. I know myself of a number of hurried approaches which are now being made to subordinate members of newspaper staffs. But it is not the slightest use getting these subordinates into the office unless the key positions, the actual control, is in the hands of experienced men who have occupied positions of similar responsibility before. It is these people who set the pace and control the machine, and until you place the actual work in the hands of men who know by practical experience how newspapers and the great news agencies work, you cannot expect to have a successful Ministry. Lord Macmillan," he concluded, "has had a machine thrust upon him which is wrongly constituted and wrongly manned. In my opinion, based on a lifelong experience of newspaper work, he has got to make the most drastic changes in the constitution and personnel of his Ministry before he has any chance of achieving success."

Following this speech, Lord Camrose was invited to help direct the Ministry of Information. But for some time no difference was noticeable by a long-suffering public, which continued to remain hopeful that, should the war eventually end, they would at least be notified through official sources within a week.

Meantime the posters with which the Ministry was flooding the country indicated a deplorable waste of official time (though not of talent), a waste of paper (which for more useful purposes of newspaper production was rationed), and a waste of money for space and bill-posting, as well as a total lack of imagination. At a time when the whole nation was showing a calmness and courage that were unsurpassable and when everyone was only too anxious to serve the country in any capacity, it seemed entirely useless to make such futile appeals as the posters were doing. The public needed no such stimulant to its courage.

A Ministry of Home Security also was foreshadowed and established on September 7th, 1939. A Home Supply Department was put under the Home Secretary, and a Ministry of National Service was added to the work of the Minister of Labour, and a new Ministry of Economic Warfare was set up, while a Ministry of Shipping was foreshadowed.

## CHAPTER 5

### PROVISIONING AND RATIONING

THE man in the street's view of rationing is simple and explicit. It is restriction upon articles of everyday consumption imposed by the State in time of war. He realizes that there are behind this restriction at least three cogent reasons: the desire for just distribution, the need for national economy, and the diversion of transport to military purposes. Indeed, in the present war the need for rationing has received a universal recognition, and the actual policy imposed has aroused a nation-wide acquiescence, that is unexampled in history. Many a besieged city of the past tells stories of privations willingly shared, but this systematic restriction of consumption of materials of which no shortage is apparent is of singular interest to the historically-minded observer. When our leaders talk of a "democratic" war and a "united front," here, at home, in the daily life of the family, is the powerful example of their ready phrase.

We have, in fact, realized that war, like peace, is indivisible. In a large-scale modern war there is no genuine neutrality. For good or evil, every decision of a neutral Power affects the fortunes of the belligerents. In the same way there are no non-combatants. The housewife's efficiency and care, the worker's zeal, the child's health, are all part of the sum of the nation's capacity to resist a crippling pressure, to exert unparalleled effort.

In every country today the greater part of war preparation consists in the transformation of the peacetime economy into a war machine. For centuries the essentials of military activity have been two-fold—the direction and supply of striking and defensive forces, the manipulation of political influence. Today these distinctions are meaningless. The Army, so to speak, extends everywhere.

There are unusual features in the attitude of the democratic public to the War of 1939. In the first place, the lesson of twenty-five years earlier is clear and present in the popular mind. It took at least two years, it took the immediate threat of starvation, and it took an apparently successful submarine blockade, to force widespread rationing upon the Government. Even more than the danger of defeat, it was perhaps the



evidence of extreme public discontent that persuaded the Cabinet to adopt a widespread scheme of control. For the inability of an individualist wholesale and retail supply and distribution system to face the tension and demands of modern warfare was never more clearly demonstrated than at the end of 1917. Food queues could be seen all over the country. In the Midlands munitions workers left their jobs in order to relieve their wives in the drudgery and depression of the food queue. It is true there was already a Food Controller. Four days after succeeding to the Premiership, Mr. Lloyd George appointed Lord Devonport to the unenviable task. But he had been given no encouragement to face his problems drastically. He may be said to have applied the methods of an economizing middle-class housewife to an insolvent industry. There were to be meatless days, there was a voluntary rationing scale, there were constant public appeals to economize in bread or cereals. But the bitter years of the War soon revealed the flimsiness of such policies. It was Lord Rhondda, the successor of Lord Devonport, who saw the necessity for a new dynamism and who brought the necessary energy and administrative power to the problem ; in fact, Rhondda's name may well be ranked with Haldane's in the rôle of those who made victory possible.

Lord Rhondda's solution of the problem deserves careful examination. Like most of the *originating* English administrators, he had vast experience of local government. In the local administrative unit the official sees more of the business man, of the private interest, than he does in the sanctuaries of Whitehall. In six months from his realization of the need for a national system, rationing had moved smoothly into general operation. And its success depended, all along the line, on the local authority. Authorities were to submit their own schemes, a final date was fixed, conditions and formulæ were laid down, but the great initiative was given to the local body.

In the War of 1939 the Food Ministry had the great advantage of starting with a National Register. But it may perhaps be wondered whether this very advantage, together with the secure assurance of public support, did not contribute to a too early and too complete centralization of the scheme. What is impossible in Birmingham is not always impossible in the Cotswolds.

Again, the Government today can inform the public and mobilize opinion in a way that was never possible before. The B.B.C. can issue instructions and warnings, can set schemes into active operation, can persuade and exhort. With common opinion so sympathetic, with the per-

suasion and information of the public so greatly facilitated, it is no wonder that the Government felt it possible to introduce a compulsory and wide-ranging ration scheme from the outset.

But the decision was also forced upon them. Whether the consumer or trader was sympathetic or not, rationing had to come. It is useful to ask why.

We are not the only people who have learned from the last war. Quite apart from the actual enemies we may be fighting at the moment, no belligerent today will hesitate to impose a rationing scheme, for the military advantages are enormous. Even if there were no shortage either existent or probable of a certain commodity, it might be advisable to ration it. For energies, accommodation, and credit thus released may be diverted to more essential strategic uses.

“ The formation of national armies with their seven-figure numbers and the simultaneous tremendous increase in their technical requirements give rise to problems which are in the long run apparently insoluble. This is equally true for the supply of raw materials, and for finance, and perhaps also for the training and leading of the troops.”

It becomes, therefore, an essential duty for the Government of a belligerent nation to attempt to simplify its social and economic organization so that its energies may be directed to one centralizing purpose. An integral part of this process of simplification is the rationalization of commodity demand. We may perhaps draw a convenient temporary distinction between rationing and the rationalization of demand. In rationing, consumption is limited because it is to the direct interest of the State to economize in consuming that particular commodity. In the rationalization of demand a wider aim can be seen, a wider process is at work. The distribution of a commodity is restricted, because there is no vital harm in restricting it and because economic energy is thus released; or because a cheaper and more efficient substitute can be made; or a home-produced alternative is available. All such policies of restriction and direction are part of the “total war” of which the rationing of food consumption is the typical sign. And it must always be borne in mind that in a country whose maritime trade and food imports are so vital, the question of priority of shipping facilities for absolute essentials is paramount.

It is the duty of a belligerent Government, then, to plan and simplify production and consumption. But how much more is this necessary

when its apparent power has been for years preparing itself for the stress of "total war"; when the whole of the enemy's economy is subsidiary to the creation, direction, and supply of the largest armed force she can support. This is no place for the discussion of the social and ethical advantages of democracy. The plain fact remains that for a democracy war is a transformation, for a totalitarian State it is a continuation, of normal life.

The planned totalitarian State can accumulate reserves before the declaration of hostilities. It can be as ruthless to the retailer as it can to the labourer. It does not consider the ultimate account that will some day be presented. Its costs are vastly reduced because the State itself is so preponderatingly the *entrepreneur* in production. In all these things it has the advantage of the democratic belligerent which must vigorously transform itself before it can face its enemy on equal terms.

The democratic State, then, in the midst of war, will be concerned on the economic front with three main tactical advances. We may represent them diagrammatically :

PRODUCTION		DISTRIBUTION		CONSUMPTION	
RESTRICTION	INCREASE	RESTRICTION	INCREASE	INCREASE	RESTRICTION
Of non-essentials and of Goods with "safer alternatives."	Of military necessities.	Of "luxury" services &c.	Of military transport— of transport of goods where credit is required &c.	By armed forces—also of "safer alternatives."	Of general consumption owing to lower standard of living.

The trouble with most views of rationing is that they look only at the third circle. If we conceive of these three circles, enormously detailed and elaborated, we have a fair picture of what the Ministry of Economic Co-ordination should properly be concerned with.

The inevitable question is, Can it be done in the time? Active military war may seem to be in a state of stalemate at the moment, but the observer's eyes will tell him that this economic war is in high gear now. What is proposed by the democratic State is the altering of the whole balance of the machine; the transformation, it may be, of the motives for which men work. This must be done while all kinds of new and heavy strains are being put upon the public life: while consumption

of some goods soars to incredible heights. Of course, it must be done. But it is good to realize that this is no time for half-measures, for gradual preparation, for over-confidence when a few weeks' stocks of a certain commodity are in reserve. The war is on.

Let it be seen, too, that in some ways the position at the beginning of the War of 1939 is more complex than that of 1914. The Great War left a legacy of industrial and economic control. In the effort to solve the problems inherited from that war, and in pursuit of a traditional policy of beneficent intervention in industry, a whole fabric of Boards and Acts governing the nation's economic life had arisen. These things cannot be swept aside, for marketing arrangements, in particular, depend upon them. Nor, on the other hand, can they be used as they were. So the economist had the difficult task of rearing the building of totalitarian war with the bricks of compromise.

This difficulty was not lessened by the obvious lack of genuine determination to organize the nation's economic life in terms of war power. No doubt there were good reasons for some efforts to preserve the structure of pre-war commercial life, but the great and growing criticism of the Cabinet's attitude towards economic policy was that which pointed out the weakness of divided responsibility. Mr. Shinwell argued, in an early debate in the House of Commons, that the lack of co-ordination between the various departments concerned in one way or the other with food control was certain to lead to disorder.

"There was the Ministry of Supply, responsible for the production and purchase of war materials; the Ministry of Food, charged with the task of maintaining and increasing food supplies; the Ministry of Blockade, charged with the duty of preventing supplies reaching the enemy; the Department of Overseas Trade, 'supposed to be concerned' with overseas trade. Then the Board of Trade seemed to be employed in deciding whether or not traders should be granted licences for export or import. Obviously, there must be some overlapping, but that did not account for the numerous complaints about traders' difficulties as to consignments from neutral countries, nor did it explain why firms were sent from department to department in a fruitless search for information."

In fact, in the early weeks of war there was much to give rise to grave disquiet in the policy of the Cabinet so far as food was concerned. There was the brief, inglorious experiment of fish control to gaze upon. The control was eventually removed and it again became possible to purchase fish in London shops. The distribution of meat had given rise to grave

difficulties for the retailer. Many branches of the woollen industry had been seriously hit, paper mills were closing down, and, to quote another example, great sections of the dried-fruit industry were facing bankruptcy. Sir Harold Webbe expressed in the House what may be considered as the typical viewpoint of the business man to the whole problem. "While no one questioned the responsibility of the Government for controlling and regulating imports, for securing equitable distribution of stocks, and for protecting the public against unfair rises of prices, he submitted that, within those limits, industries should be left to function along the lines which they understood and which they had built up by experience."

In fact, the general position of the nation's economic life may be visualized as consisting of three frameworks—a framework of individualist financial, productive, and distributive enterprise; over this a framework of collectivist legislation and control built up to protect the worker in specific home industries; over this a number of executive departments, all pouring forth regulations, which had sprung up hastily in response to particular demands enforced by the pressure of war. A certain scepticism about the ability of this fabric to resist the attack of the highly organized totalitarian State could, perhaps, be justified.

It is not without instructiveness to compare the position of the enemy power in 1939 with its position in 1914. There is also a certain unhappy resemblance between some of the claims made by the German Government in 1914, and some of the over-confident pronouncements of business men in Great Britain in 1939. Mr. Barnard Ellinger quotes Dr. Helferich, a former Director of the Deutsche Bank and a German Minister, as saying, in 1913: "The increase of our economic power supports and strengthens our economic and military position. Our economic development has enabled us, and will continue to enable us, to raise the huge sum necessary to bring our defensive forces on land and water to such a pitch in numbers and equipment as will permit us to confront our enemy without fear."

A committee of German economists and statisticians reported on the whole food position of the German State in 1914. They concluded "that Germany, with proper care, is unconquerable, even with regard to her food supply."

The truth is, of course, that no one can tell what the demands made by a modern war might be. The only policy is the waging of the "total war," in all directions, from the start.

The lesson must also be learned that Germany, quite apart from the advantages that her totalitarian organization may give her in the pursuit

of war, has had opportunity to reorganize her economic activities in constant consciousness of the difficulties of 1914-18. Figures given by Dr. Elsas in the London and Cambridge Economic Service show that "even with her reduced territory, the new Reich (excluding Bohemia and Moravia) produced 30 per cent. more coal, over double the amount of lignite, 30 per cent. more iron, and double the quantity of steel that she produced in 1913." Of course, she would be gravely short of her wartime consumption of iron, even so; and even in peacetime she consumes more than three times the quantity of mineral oils that she can produce at home.

But it is evident that the Nazi leaders had given particular attention to the problem of food supply—likely to be their gravest difficulty in wartime. There was little improvement between the position in 1914 and that in 1939 so far as actual self-sufficiency goes. In 1909-13 she was producing 80 per cent. of her consumption and in 1937 82 per cent. Austria and Czecho-Slovakia, however, are less purely agricultural than the German lands themselves, so there might, in fact, be a genuine decline in the actual extent to which the greater Reich is self-sufficient. This is not, after all, the only way in which the value of food production can be estimated. In calorific value it is calculated that German food production in 1937 was 8 per cent. less than the production of 1914. A very serious shortage in the last war was the shortage of fats. There is every indication that this shortage continued into 1939. Roughly speaking, the position of Germany in 1937 was that she was self-sufficient in barley, rye, and oats, and possibly meat, but produced only about four-fifths of her peacetime needs of butter, wheat, fruit, fish, and eggs.

There were features here which suggest that the advantage was on the side of the democratic Powers, but it must be remembered that the German Government was perfectly aware of these deficiencies. It had for long adopted the two obvious methods of remedying them.

In the first place, the German people had for years been exhorted to tighten their belts that the national armies might go forward. What would to the English working-man be short commons had become a well-established habit. Germany starts the present war with a complete rationing system that was never equalled in the War of 1914. It may perhaps be argued that, because of this, national stamina would be reduced; her people would have neither the physical nor the moral reserves to confront a protracted war of blockade. There may be truth in this, but it is important not to ignore the psychological aspects of rationing. Who can argue whether habit is more powerful than hope?

In addition, however, to her current production, Germany had been building up stocks of essential commodities in the last two years prior to 1939. English authorities estimated cautiously that these amount to nine months' supply of wheat, nearly a year's supply of rye, and four months' supply of fats. It will be seen that, even in regard to foodstuffs alone, German reserves were by no means negligible, and yet she had not hesitated to impose a system of rationing that would seem to imply that every single resource must be husbanded from the start. Is this reasoning right for Germany alone?

It is not possible to make a comparison like this without stressing one great and evident advantage on the English side—the backing of her Dominions. They would be able to supply most of the metals and minerals needed by the Mother Country, but, above all, they could do much to provide vital foodstuffs. Vast amounts of cereals, dairy produce, meat, fruit, and sugar were being released for the British consumer. In normal times seven-eighths of Great Britain's imports of tea, more than a third of her imported meat, 60 per cent. of her fresh fruit, came from the Empire. New Zealand had already informed the British Government that she had placed at their disposal the whole of her surplus of dairy produce. The Dominions, as a whole, agreed, that no advantage shall be taken of war conditions in selling to this country. Such assets as these are not to be lightly dismissed in a comparison of England and Germany with respect to their ability to feed themselves through years of war.

There is no doubt that, when the War of 1939 has worked its disastrous way out, the survivors will have to listen to the familiar arguments about "war guilt" and "direct responsibility." A heavy charge has often been levelled against Mr. Asquith's Government. Either they did not make their intentions clear to Germany or, knowing conflict to be inevitable, they made inadequate preparations against the oncoming strain. In the present crisis we can at least be confident that the main difficulties, particularly in regard to supply, were foreseen and planned against, even though the actual planning may arouse some criticisms.

For example, on April 17th, 1939, the Government published its plan for the creation of a Ministry of Food in "the event of National Emergency." The basic features of this plan have been adhered to since the outbreak of war. The essence of the scheme was, and is, that the Government should take over all real responsibility from food importers. Obviously, two things must be controlled before any effective rationing scheme

could be possible. They are the amount of imports and the prices at which these are sold to wholesalers. On the Government's programme the Ministry of Food became, in fact, in the second week of the war, when it replaced the Food Defence Plans Department of the Board of Trade, the sole importer. Any importing firm now acting is really acting as the direct agent of the Government. It has no control over shipping or price levels, which are the concern of the Ministry of Shipping and the Board of Trade. The wholesaler, too, finds the whole position simplified. He buys direct from the Food Ministry at prescribed prices. In short, what has happened is that the import end of the food-supply industry has been mobilized as a Government department. The structure of private enterprise is there, but the classic initiative has been removed.

Clearly also, a policy for retail distribution must follow on this control of imports. The first step of the scheme is to secure some measure of control over the retailer. This is done by insisting that no retailer can buy unless he holds a certificate from the local Food Control Committee.

As the last phrase suggests, much of the fabric of Lord Rhondda's scheme was maintained. The local authorities were still constituent parts of the food-control organism, although they probably lacked powers and initiatives that could properly be theirs. On the outbreak of war 1,400 Food Control Committees were to be set up, each operating in the area of a local authority. Their main task was to deal with the retail food trade, to act as the local representative of the directing policy of the Ministry of Food, to organize the opinion of the local retailers. Each Food Control Committee had responsible to it, a Food Executive officer—usually a salaried officer of the local authority.

At the same time committees of traders were set up in every part of the country to discuss methods of easing problems of distribution in wartime.

The policy of the Government is exceedingly clear from these statements: it was, as far as possible, to set private enterprise at no disadvantage, while securing a centralized control over food supply and distribution, at the same time to give the local area a chance of expressing its views and criticisms, of manipulating in some measure its own machinery, while keeping real control in the hands of the Ministry.

What has been said earlier about the German accumulation of reserves was evidently realized also by the British Government, although its measures could hardly be called expansive. They included the building up of reserves of wheat, sugar, and whale-oil in order to tide over the difficulties of any temporary dislocation that had to be faced.



Immediately after the declaration of this plan came the announcement that wholesale food firms in certain areas were to be grouped together in large units. This was an obvious method of securing a simple channel of distribution from the importer through the wholesaler to the retailer.

The basis for the fuller rationing scheme may be found in Sir Henry French's report to the Board of Trade in April 1938. This report clearly indicated that plans for the control of food in wartime had been under consideration for more than five years. Confidential arrangements had already been made, at the time of the appearance of the report, with the Dominions, with other Governments, with shippers and importers.

The objectives of the report were clearly stated—to find methods of avoiding shortage and regulating prices, to avoid dislocation, and to prepare a rationing scheme if it was considered necessary.

The central purposes of this document have been followed in the scheme which came into force. Ration books were to be issued at the earliest date after the outbreak of hostilities. A Food Controller was to take charge. Any temporary shortage or any obvious attempts at profiteering were to be countered by the Government. There was to be a Director of Supply for each main commodity. Prices were to be stabilized immediately. All distribution was to be localized in central depots. Flour mills and sugar refineries were to be taken over at once. It was agreed that rationing of the main articles of food could not be avoided.

In addition to the general body of the report detailed plans were already in existence to deal with two basic articles of food—meat, and wheat and flour. The "meat" policy envisaged here, and put into operation in September 1939, aroused a good deal of criticism. A ring of depôts was to be established around London to replace the central market at Smithfield. The inconveniences and delays of this scheme provoked some discontent among retailers, and the replacement of Smithfield had serious effects on the owners of the market. But it should be realized that the implications of this plan were conditioned by the widespread fear of immediate aerial attack upon London once war broke out.

It will be seen that in this preliminary plan lies the whole order of the food-control scheme now in force. In addition to the control of food the control of coal and petrol was planned long before September. Here the Government's problem was somewhat easier, for home coal production could easily be raised to a much higher figure, while the civilian con-

sumption of petrol could be materially reduced without jeopardizing essential services.

No account of the forward-looking policy of the Government in the matter of food supply and control would be complete without some reference to the efforts to stimulate home production. The service of the allotment in the last war is of high importance, and the Ministry of Agriculture is making much effort to arouse the interest of the public in methods of agricultural self-help. At the same time a vigorous step towards encouraging the greater concentration of the farming industry on cereal production was made on May 4th, 1939, when Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith offered a subsidy of £2 per acre in respect of permanent grassland ploughed up before September 30th. The period of effectiveness of this grant has since been prolonged.

The plans administrated by the Government were set in motion in September 1939. The suggestion has already been made that the introduction of extensive rationing schemes was greatly eased by a complete national registration. The public was made to realize, when the enumeration was taken, that a scheme of family food supply would follow the completion of the task. The Ministry of Food announced that food rationing would come into operation on January 8th, 1940. The contemplated allowances of the rationed commodities were already indicated—there would be 4 oz. per head of bacon and 4 oz. per head of butter weekly. From that date also consumers would be expected to limit their purchases of sugar to 1 lb. per head each week, until such time as it too was strictly rationed.

The dangers in any scheme of rationing to the restaurant and catering trade are easily seen. The formula reached for the protection of these interests was to fix the allowance of butter at  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. per head for each meal taken—no coupons were to be required for this. Bacon and ham, on the other hand, were to be served only on the surrender of half a coupon for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of those foods.

Efforts were made to ensure that those in need of particular nourishment or preferential treatment were not neglected. Traveller's ration books were devised. Additional ration books providing extra allowances were to be issued to "heavy" workers and to adolescent children. The general methods of the present rationing scheme are now only too familiar to all of us.

Most people realize that the real acuteness of the difficulties of food control in wartime has not yet been felt in this country. The initial

system of food control fulfilled the useful functions of accustoming the food-supply industries to the new needs of Government control, of economizing in materials and transport, and of familiarizing the public with the commonest reminder of "total war."

But the arguments used earlier will suggest that our whole system of rationing and food provisioning might be unlikely to work successfully once the strain was really felt. More rigid rationing and more severe control of the whole structure of the "food industry" might well be necessary. For the time being rationing operated as an economic advantage in respect of credits and transport, rather than as a necessity.

Germany grows the greater part of her food. From the military point of view this is an undoubted advantage. She would hardly dare to face any modern war if she were not in this position. There are probably also considerable military advantages in possessing a large population of agricultural workers, though we must not forget that the inhabitants of our ally France had the same merit.

But this agricultural semi-self-sufficiency has also decided disadvantages. Food can be grown cheaper abroad. England can pay for it in manufactures. Thus she uses the machine, she releases more and more men who can be made available for national work. Mr. Crowther shows the contrast admirably by figures :

"In 1935 the agricultural and fishing industries employed . . . 1,400,000 persons in Great Britain. In the same year food-and feeding-stuffs to the value of £356 millions were imported. Now in the same year it took, in British industry as a whole, the labour of 1,600,000 persons to produce goods to the value of £356 millions. So if we think of manufactured exports being sold to pay for the imports of food, we can say that about 3 million persons were required to provide the food for 45 million people, or about  $6\frac{2}{3}$  persons for every 100 consumers. In Germany the number of persons working on the land in 1933 was 9,200,000, and the number required to make goods for exchange into imported food was about 300,000. The labour force required to feed the German people is therefore . . . about  $14\frac{1}{2}$  per 100 consumers."

So we may perhaps encourage ourselves with these reflections : if the sea-ways are kept open, if the control of food supply and distribution in this country is rigid and unwasteful, directed to the interests of the whole body of consumers alone, our economy in man-power may be a deciding factor in the war.

## CHAPTER 6

### RUSSIA BEFORE THE WAR

BY ANTHONY ARMSTRONG

OF all the nations embroiled in the Second World War, few played such a strange rôle as the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics under its leader and Dictator, Joseph Dzhugashvili, known to the world as Stalin. The cloak of mystery, however, which both traditionally and effectively surrounds the Kremlin will probably never be lifted sufficiently to enable historians to learn the full truth of all the hidden moves and counter-moves which preceded and continued through the war, and which integrated Russia's policy. One can only record the facts, speculate as to their meaning, and note their repercussions.

Soviet Russia's part in the war between Germany and the democracies may be said to have begun at that historic date known as "Munich." Prior to that she had been primarily concerned with the East, where, in the fashion of the day, she had been conducting an undeclared and practically unreported small war with Japan along her Korean border. So far as her relations with Germany were concerned, her rôle was largely the inactive one of "bugbear," for at the end of 1936 Germany had signed an Anti-Comintern Pact with Japan, and a year later brought out a second version, with Italy added to the cast. The statements of Germany's official pact-signer, Herr Joachim von Ribbentrop, on these occasions are interesting to recall in view of subsequent events. In 1936 he declared that "Germany is a bulwark against this disease (Bolshevism) in the heart of Europe," and in 1937 that she "is not prepared to come to terms with Communists nor to give up for political or other reasons the vital and essential fight to combat Bolshevism." Russia's reply to all this was just a plain statement that the real menace to all nations was Fascism and an expression of readiness for war, coupled with the usual declaration that she did not desire it. Meanwhile she continued to hold a watching brief to the westward and concentrated on Japan in the East.

Then, at Munich, on September 30th, 1938, Mr. Chamberlain and M. Daladier signed away Czecho-Slovakia's hope of prolonged existence.

That action was the first link in the chain of events which ultimately brought Russia, headed by the inscrutably smiling M. Stalin, into the European war tangle.

It is not the business of this chapter to discuss in detail "Munich's" full relationship to the War of 1939. It is, however, extremely likely that the returning British Premier—though he dramatically brought back to a relieved and cheering populace "peace for our time"—already had a strong suspicion that he had merely acquired yet another personally autographed addition to the *Hitleriana* of broken promises. Fresh from his personal contact with the mentality of the Führer, he probably already realized at the back of his mind that what he had brought back was not "peace for our time," but only "peace for a time," and that war with Germany had to come some day. That it did not come that very next day was because Czecho-Slovakia was sacrificed in the operations of preliminary strategy; even as she would have been unavoidably sacrificed in the operations of tactics had war then broken out—just as Poland was unavoidably sacrificed in the operations of tactics a year later. But when the big ultimate conflict is destined to be, as was even then widely recognized, a struggle to the death between democracy and totalitarianism, between the policy of arbitration and freedom and the rule of aggression and repression—in short, between two totally different ways of life for all nations—then the sacrifice of one nation to brute force, however repugnant at the moment, may perhaps be justified, if that sacrifice ultimately ensures the safety of other nations and the destruction of the reign of brute force for all time.

For, though the question is open to argument, it remains extremely doubtful whether the Franco-British chances against Germany, had war broken out in September 1938, would have been anywhere near as good as they were when war did come a year later. England, militarily, and France, politically, were not at that earlier date fully prepared for a European war: Germany was. And as for the possibility of Russian aid against Fascism, two things must be borne in mind. First, that though the Franco-Soviet Pact existed, a majority of opinion in England was still doubtful about "shaking hands with Russia"; and second, that Russia's accepted hatred of Germany was possibly even then not quite so deep as other countries might have supposed. Six months before, in March, M. Stalin had "liquidated" a number of associates—the Rykov and Bukharin group, close friends of Lenin—who were particularly distasteful to Herr Hitler; and that same month he had let the

German annexation of Austria pass without protest, though subsequently proposing a four-Power conference against further aggression. This last may or may not have been political eyewash. But experience has shown that the words of Russian leaders are rarely indicative of Russia's contemplated policy.

Whatever view, then, is held as to the chances of victory possessed by the democracies in 1938, it is now generally admitted that the year gained, September 1938 to September 1939, increased these chances. The year, in fact, was of greater strategical value to Britain than to Germany. The latter, too, of course, was enabled to prepare further for war, but being already in a high state of efficiency, with resources already fully exploited for aggression, the time-lapse favoured the countries which, with resources hardly yet tapped for war purposes, had not yet attained that goal. Certainly Germany had immediately acquired, and continued to acquire during the next twelve months, further resources, both material and financial, as well as internal prestige for her leader and external territorial advantages. The latter, however, were accompanied by an indigestible residue of sullen intransigent population, which in no sense of the word could be considered an asset. Germany gained also a year's further preparation for the defence of her Western Front and for consolidation on her new eastern boundaries, but that year was yet another period of strain and sacrifice under practically war conditions for her people.

England, on the other hand, though temporarily sacrificing much moral support in neutral countries, notably America, gained time for intense national rearmament and preparation to meet what the subconscious national mind was gradually recognizing to be inevitable. She gained time to let the ugly "betrayal" of Czecho-Slovakia slowly acquire the less ugly aspect of a genuine desire to see if peace with Herr Hitler was humanly possible. She simultaneously gained time to try to make it clear, if again this was possible, that this British desire for peace was not so overmastering as to amount to an intention to avoid war at any cost; in short, that there would be a definite "Thus far and no farther."

Those twelve months also were in the nature of rope for Herr Hitler to hang himself, to show once and for all, even to the most ardent peace-lover in the ranks of the democracies, the real and utter worthlessness of his Munich promises, and thus make Britain a present of the moral advantage of a really "good cause," without the backing of which the British can rarely fight and win. This self-hanging Herr Hitler duly per-

formed by his annexation of Bohemia and Moravia in March 1939. As a direct result the British policy of "appeasement" was, to the expressed delight of all the smaller democracies as well as the U.S.A., formally declared at an end; the "Thus far" line was publicly drawn at Poland.

Finally that post-Munich year gave Britain time to consolidate her future position abroad as well as at home by starting to form an Anti-aggression Front, an important sector of which would naturally be held by Russia.

The first approach to Russia from Britain came three days after the successful German aggression against Bohemia and Moravia. Herr Hitler, urged on by his Destiny, his desire for *Lebensraum* for German *Volk*, his sympathy for oppressed German minorities, whatever name, in fact, he cared to give to his insensate and insatiable urge to territorial acquisition, seemed still to be turning his eyes south-eastwards. He abruptly presented Roumania with what was, in effect, an ultimatum, demanding far-reaching economic concessions. Britain at once asked the Soviet to state what her attitude would be in case of Roumania being attacked by Germany, for it was not expected that Russia could view such a move with equanimity, considering as she did that she still had a moral claim to those parts of Roumania, notably Bessarabia, which had formerly been Russian.

The Soviet reply to this was to propose a six-Power conference, to be held at once, preferably in Bucharest, and to include Russia, Britain, France, Turkey, Poland, and Roumania. The object of this proposed conference was to decide upon a method of preventing future acts of aggression. To the dismay, however, of all those in England, principally Left-Wing adherents, who were convinced that the Soviet was the one powerful country, anti-imperialistic and peace-loving, who could help successfully to crush the German menace, this conference was refused by the British Government. The reason given was that the time for such a step was not yet ripe, but it is also probable that the British leaders still wished to avoid any charge of aggressive action on their part against Germany under the guise of the recently coined and widely vociferated phrase "encirclement." A steadily growing section of the British people, however, attributed the refusal to the "Tory" tendencies of Mr. Chamberlain's Government, to an innate but unreasonable fear and distrust of anything to do with "Communist" Russia.

This belief was given fresh impetus when Herr Hitler promptly went on to achieve a trade treaty with Roumania, and at the same time, via

the usual "ultimatum" technique, lifted Memel painlessly off Lithuania. At the end of the month of March a formal statement had to be made by the Premier denying the existence of any impediments to agreement with the Soviet due to the highly contrasted political régimes of the two countries concerned. At the same time came the famous, and ultimately fateful, guarantee to Poland of Britain's full support against any aggression which the Poles considered it "vital to resist with their national forces."

When this guarantee was a fortnight later extended to Greece and Roumania, the Opposition returned to the attack. They argued, not unreasonably, that it was of little use to guarantee help against threatened German aggression in countries which lay on the far side of Germany and were thus cut off from the source of that very help by the source of that very threat. The proper and only country in a position to enforce the guarantee was Soviet Russia, whose ideology was so diametrically opposed to that of the Nazis that she would almost automatically desire to champion potential victims of Nazidom. Had she not been practically marked out for this task by the totalitarian States themselves, who had made her the sole object of their Anti-Comintern Pact, and had she not been proving this in Spain during the last two years by her readiness to take up arms in defence of liberty? Without Russia no guarantee could be real.

Whether some of the Eastern European nations whose integrity was to be thus preserved agreed with this view quite so enthusiastically is open to doubt. They may well have felt themselves between the devil and the deep sea. Their distrust and fear of Russia was ingrained in them long before the Nazi menace appeared on the opposite horizon, and to ask Russia to join in protecting them from that menace seemed to them very much like calling a murderer into your house to evict a burglar.

This point, however, was not appreciated or possibly even recognized by the pro-Russian-alliance party in England. To them the only proper policy to be adopted against Nazi aggression was that of collective security, and collective security could not be effective *unless* collective. In other words, Russia *must* be asked to join with Britain, France, and other law-abiding countries in forming a Peace Front.

In answer Sir John Simon, speaking for the Government, reiterated that there was no desire on the part of Britain "to exclude Russia, or to fail to take full advantage of the help of Russia in the cause of peace." To which statement many added to themselves the words "*and* in time of war," recalling with satisfaction Stalin's many boasts as to the effi-



ency and numbers of the Soviet armed Forces. Indeed, all but the most "Die-hard" representatives of the Tory factions thankfully saw negotiations formally opened with Russia on April 15th, 1939.

It was not long before it appeared that all was not going too smoothly with these Anglo-Russian negotiations. The reasons for this were at first obscure—except perhaps to those actually in the centre of things. Quite possibly the Soviet—strange as it might have sounded to British ears—was even more suspicious of Britain than Britain was of her, and genuinely distrusted the British interpretation of collective security. In view of the fact that Germany was then probing eastwards, it may have looked to Russia very much as though Britain was going to get all the security while the Soviet collected all the trouble. Quite possibly also M. Stalin was at this stage still piqued at the British refusal a month earlier to enter upon his proposed six-Power conference. For it must be remembered that Britain had given a similar refusal a year previously, after the Austrian annexation, when the Soviet had suggested the four-Power conference between herself, Britain, France, and the U.S.A.; and M. Stalin may have wished to spend a little time in impressing on Britain that the boot was now on the other foot. After three weeks, however M. Stalin abruptly removed M. Litvinov from his post as Commissar for Foreign Affairs, in which capacity he had been conducting the negotiations, and replaced him by M. Molotov, bringing himself at the same time into the foreground.

Negotiations, however, still hung fire. At this time it is reasonable to suppose that while the Soviet was quite ready in principle to join in resisting German aggression, the difficulty was to agree just what shape in practice this help should take. The Russian plan in general was a revival of the old Triple Entente between France, Britain, and Russia, each to help the other if involved in war on behalf of any other State. To this Britain found herself unable to agree. The exact reasons for her rejection of the proposal were not known, for no official record of the progress of the negotiations was published in this country at the time. It was generally understood, however, that the main grounds of objection were that such an alliance would be far too wide, and vague, in scope. There was without doubt a definite reluctance on Britain's part to tie herself to assist Russia if involved in war, when the cause of such war, not to put too fine a point on it, was in Russia's hands to determine, and might easily have been one which Britain herself would not have considered adequate or even sincere. (In the light of later events "aggres-



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sion " by Finland might easily have come under this heading.) The Soviet retort to this was that Britain appeared to be asking for Soviet assistance if involved in war through her Polish and Roumanian guarantees, without offering reciprocity should Russia become involved in a war through guarantees of her own to other East European countries. This was denied officially on May 10th by the British Government, but official Russian sources in return expressed their dissatisfaction with the denial.

Another pause in the negotiations was now reached, during which Britain, while preparing counter-proposals for Russia's consideration, skilfully managed to induce Turkey to promise a Mutual Aid Pact and so to join the Peace Front—a move which could not have been without its effect on Moscow.

By May 27th the Anglo-French counter-proposals were agreed upon and presented and the Soviet replied a week later, still in an argumentative frame of mind. A note of bitterness had also crept into the relations between the two countries, which hardly seemed to augur well for the future. M. Molotov, in a public statement at the end of the month, broadly hinted that it was not Russia's policy to be involved in any conflict for the exclusive benefit of other countries, and resuscitated the old gibe of pulling other people's chestnuts out of the fire.

Soviet policy, in so far as it can be guessed at at that time, might here be considered. Russia's foremost concern was the prevention of her principal city and main port in the west, Leningrad, from being threatened by any hostile Power, particularly that very strong and hostile State, the German Reich. Germany had already established a highly successful technique of peaceful infiltration into a country, followed gradually by an offer of economic alliance, which imperceptibly led to a position of economic dependence. This in turn enabled pressure to be put on the country concerned to accede to demands which might be anything from permission to occupy and fortify strategic points up to military alliance, or even complete vassalage under threat of war.

M. Stalin had long been afraid of this German technique being applied to the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia, and even ultimately Finland. It was a state of affairs he could not contemplate for a moment, with the Esthonian frontier barely eighty miles, and the nearest part of Finland only twenty-five miles, from Leningrad and its important harbour and railway. Moreover, the comparatively narrow three-hundred-mile-long Gulf of Finland, at the head of which Leningrad lay,

was flanked by Finland and Esthonia, and at the same time was Russia's main sea artery to Britain, France, the Atlantic, and the West.

M. Stalin, in short, was prepared to go to great lengths to prevent any likelihood of German domination of the Baltic States, and so of Russia in her most vital and vulnerable spot. No bargain with England and France in which this was not taken into account and guarded against was going to interest him in the slightest, and all the Russian proposals and counter-proposals, whatever form they took in general, insisted in particular on this one point. France and Britain must join with Russia in going at once to the assistance of Finland, Esthonia, and Latvia should their neutrality be violated.

On the other hand, these Baltic States themselves were not at all in favour of being guaranteed, as has been hinted earlier. They were, further, particularly anxious that, if this had to be, a very clear definition of what constituted "violation of neutrality" should be included in any agreement to which the bigger Powers might come. It was, in fact, this attitude on the part of the Baltic States which was the main stumbling-block to agreement and which by the beginning of June had given the negotiations the appearance of being about to disappear down a cul-de-sac.

About the middle of June, however, fresh Anglo-French proposals were sent to Moscow, and for the first time an emissary from Britain also went, the British Ambassador having hitherto conducted the exchanges.

The fact that the emissary sent was not some responsible member of the Government, but only a senior Foreign Office official, Mr. William Strang, was the signal for the already widely voiced suspicions of those opposed to the Premier to break into chorus and even for considerable misgivings to be openly expressed by very many of his followers and the general public at large. The gist of these complaints was that the British Government did not want, or intend to make, a pact with Russia, was deliberately delaying the negotiations, and was nullifying all Russia's attempts to reach agreement. The possibility of world peace, it was stated, was being jeopardized because of the old bogey of Bolshevism. Responsible politicians charged the Government with insulting Russia. By wilder elements the Premier was even accused of preferring Herr Hitler to M. Stalin.

This public uneasiness was promptly fanned by official Russian comments, openly hinting at the British Government's insincerity and complaining of its dilatory attitude. One of these statements rather smugly pointed out that during two and a half months' negotiations, four-fifths

of the time had been used by Britain in considering her replies, and only one-fifth by the Soviet. Many level-headed people, however, considered that this apparently commendable anxiety on the part of the Soviet to have its proposals quickly accepted was because they were evidently held to be extremely favourable to Soviet policy. Russia was thus trying at this stage to use British public opinion to help her conclude a good bargain.

For it cannot be truthfully maintained that Britain was deliberately avoiding agreement. The Government was genuinely anxious to come to terms, but the terms had to be both equitable and workable, nor were they to be susceptible to subtle misconstruction later on. The main obstacle to agreement was still the extreme reluctance of the Baltic States to accept any assistance against Germany—at any rate from that particular country of those negotiating who would be most likely and available to render it. Indeed, on the very day that the British emissary arrived in Moscow, Latvia took the opportunity of categorically rejecting the Soviet proposals for guaranteeing her against aggression.

In these circumstances Britain held that all the Russian proposals, as hitherto outlined, were unworkable. In this at least the accusation that the British Government was still suspicious of Russia was quite true, but it was a vicarious suspicion, working on behalf of the States Britain was primarily seeking to protect.

Thus during the months of June and July the course of the negotiations continued to drive this way and that without achieving any real forward progress; and, though those at home could not know, the reason was that the British Government was slowly becoming aware of a change in M. Stalin's attitude. It is extremely likely that the latter had now discovered that Britain and France did not fear Germany quite so much as he had supposed, were not quite so eager to rush in terror into the Soviet embrace without looking round them first; and that therefore they were not nearly so easy to bargain with as he had anticipated. Like other dictators—though the staunch friends of Russia in England would not then have admitted that there could be any dictators but Fascist ones—M. Stalin doubtless looked upon any bargain merely as something which resulted in attaining a desired object without any corresponding sacrifice. On the other hand, the point he was insisting upon was the one thing he looked upon as vital to Russia. Without it there could be no bargain; *for* it he would bargain with anyone. A foothold in the neighbouring Baltic States he was firmly resolved to secure.

Thus it may well have been that, as a result of Franco-British determination to ensure that any bargain made should be acceptable to all concerned, he began to contemplate dropping the idea of aligning himself with the Peace Front and seeing if he could make his bargain with the other side for doing so. There are strong grounds for suspecting that as early as the end of May he had been approached by Germany with the tentative suggestion that he could have what he wanted from them if he refused to join up with Britain and France.

It has been argued that had Russia only adhered to the Peace Front, Germany would not have gone to war and that therefore nothing should have been allowed to stand in the way of coming to some amicable arrangement. It is doubtful, however, whether yielding to Russia on this point would have had the desired effect of preventing a general conflict—even had M. Stalin achieved his immediate object—control of the Baltic States. For it is just possible that M. Stalin was not really averse to war breaking out, was merely endeavouring to throw his weight on to whichever side of the scales he ultimately decided was the lighter, in order to ensure that power balance which results finally in war. Behind his immediate object there may have been an altogether wider and broader one which he kept deep in his heart, an object which did not in any way involve the preservation of European peace, but rather the mutual weakening by war of those powerful capitalistic States which threatened Russian ideological expansion westward. Though he had many years ago formally abandoned the old Communist dream of world revolution, in favour of creating a strong Russia, economically and militarily powerful, this latter goal may have been looked on by him as only a prelude. The dream perhaps had not been abandoned, but only temporarily shelved till the moment was ripe. Time alone, however, can show whether this conjecture is true.

Whatever was happening behind the scenes in Moscow, the formal business of negotiating Russia's adherence to the Peace Front still filled the stage, though it seemed the life had already gone out of it. It was watched by the world with the breathless absorption of a cinema audience looking at the representation of a massive castle and not realizing it is but a plaster façade. New British proposals were handed to M. Molotov at the end of July, but the same difficulties stood up like rocks in calm water. The small neutral States still did not want to be officially protected from or by either of the big hostile factions. In a battle of Titans, they might have said, any minnows on either side were bound to lose. Any

link-up to either camp might invite aggression from the other. In short, they did not want to be guaranteed by anyone, and Britain did not want to force them. On the other hand, Britain and France, already foreseeing Poland, via Danzig, as the first battlefield, did realize that their help for that country would be worthless without that of Russia.

But these final proposals and counter-proposals, though of vital interest at the time, are hardly now worth the detailed narration. They were surface swirls over a strong undertow ; and they bear little relation to the subsequent course of events. It is more than likely that M. Stalin was merely continuing them as an excuse to put his tongue in his cheek, for already he was in some kind of touch with Herr Hitler. Remembering, too, Czecho-Slovakia, he was no doubt still half-convinced, in spite of the British Premier's definite statement of Britain's attitude, that the clash would be limited to Germany and Poland, who would be deserted at the last minute by her powerful but far-away friends.

Nevertheless, whatever the British Government felt or knew, they continued their efforts to induce Russia to sign, in the hope that this, even if only a gesture, might serve to restrain Germany. Indeed, on August 11th military missions from France and England actually arrived in Moscow to commence staff talks. They were, wisely, not given plenary powers, and had always to refer to their capitals for instructions. While this delayed negotiations still further,—and the Russians made great play with the fact that the missions had come by cargo boat and not by air—it at least kept the situation under full Government control and also provided a further chance for the one really vital factor in the situation to sink into Herr Hitler's brain—namely, that Britain and France *were* resolute in their determination to go to war on Poland's behalf.

The most important obstacle to agreement which emerged in this new phase of the negotiations was an insistence by Russia on the presence of representatives from Poland and a refusal by the Poles. It appeared that, in conformity with the policy of the Baltic States, they had flatly stated that, whatever was arranged between the negotiating Powers, Poland was not going to permit Soviet troops on her territory. Poland had in no way relaxed her instinctive suspicion of Russia's intentions in aiding her ; nor can one say that this suspicion was not justified. It may well have been that the proffered Russian help would have resulted in " saving Poland from the Germans " in much the same way as actually happened—by absorbing most of it herself.



And so through mid-August the discussion staggered on, like a dying man, to its ignominious close.

Any lingering hope in the minds of the Allies that Russia would join with them, as had been so confidently anticipated four months before, must have been dispelled by the signing on August 19th of a Russo-German Trade Agreement, with, at the end of the Russian announcement of the fact, a significant hint of possible future improvement of political relations as well. With the German trade mission not far away on one side and the Anglo-French military mission on the other, Joseph Stalin sat in the Kremlin and smiled.

The trade pact was but the preliminary hissing of a fuse, and the bombshell burst on an astounded world two days later, on August 21st. Germany, by the hand of that avowed enemy of the Soviets, Herr von Ribbentrop, had signed a non-aggression pact with Russia. Russia had at last declared sides and the biggest *volte-face* in history had been made. The German policy of years was reversed in an instant. Herr Hitler, as he had promised, had given the democracies something to think about. Joseph Stalin continued to smile.

Stunned by this veritable disaster, the democracies for several days hardly knew how to take it. The one ray of hope, that in the agreement would be a clause providing that the Soviet would not help Germany in the event of the latter's aggression against a third party, was dispelled with the publication of the terms on August 24th, after signature the day before. The main points were as follows :

(i) Russia and Germany undertook to refrain from any act of force, any aggressive acts and any attacks against each other or in conjunction with any other Powers.

(ii) If one should become the object of warlike action on the part of a third Power, the other would in no way support that third Power.

(iii) Their Governments would in future remain in consultation with each other and keep each other informed about questions which touched their common interests.

(iv) Neither would join any other group of Powers which directly or indirectly was aimed against one of them.

(v) In case of differences arising in any question, the two countries would solve their disputes exclusively by friendly exchange of views, or, if necessary, arbitration.

(vi) The agreement would be for ten years, with a further five, unless a year's notice of retirement were given.

This last point, however, can have had no real significance. Non-aggression pacts signed by Germany never lasted a minute longer than Herr Hitler wanted them to, and no doubt M. Stalin held the same views.

Thus Russia and Germany joined hands. Herr von Ribbentrop, who signed it on behalf of his master, called the pact "an unshakable foundation on which both States will develop." What was in the heart of the organizer and prolific signer of Anti-Comintern Pacts while these words were on his lips history cannot say.

That this was an enormous success for German diplomacy cannot be denied. On the other hand, its immediate practical results were not what Herr Hitler had hoped. The one great advantage he had sought to gain—freedom to attack Poland without France and Britain going to war—did not materialize; for Britain in unequivocal terms promptly reaffirmed her pledge to Poland—though it is doubtful whether he believed this. The disadvantages must soon have become all too obvious, for on August 25th Japan announced her decision to withdraw entirely from European affairs—in short, left the Anti-Comintern Pact; Franco's Spain informed France that she was not taking sides; Italy also declared her neutrality in any coming struggle, though with North Italy as a possible "weak spot" in Germany's western defences, this may have been Mussolini's best way of aiding his Axis partner. But again, no doubt, Herr Hitler thought all this would not matter if there were no general war.

To turn to the democracies. Even at this stage there were still those in England, a sadly diminished group, who considered the Russian negotiations had been mismanaged all through, and that sheer incompetence had allowed the big fish to slip away. This group, however, was not so much anti-Hitler or pro-Stalin, anti-aggression or pro-peace, as just anti-Chamberlain. The enormous majority of people had by now begun to feel that there must have been a good deal more behind the negotiations than anyone had realized; for the full story had not been issued to the world by the British Government.

Beliefs, hopes, and fears as to the actual part Russia would play in the war which now seemed unavoidable swayed back and forth like wind-tossed straws in the week that followed the signing of the pact—the last week of August. Even the adjournment for two days on August 29th of the Soviet Supreme Council without ratifying the pact was enough to send hopes rocketing—as if any Soviet Council, however supreme, would really dare not to rubber-stamp what M. Stalin had decreed! Pessimists pointed out that Russia's vast material resources would be at

Germany's call ; optimists that Germany might call them, but could they *come* ? Pessimists pointed out that it would not be long before Russia, now benevolently neutral to Germany, joined in actively on Germany's side ; optimists that America was similarly benevolently neutral to us. Pessimists declared that Russia's Army and Air Force had been raised to a state of the highest efficiency ; optimists that this efficiency had never been properly tested, and that even M. Stalin's iron will could not graft real efficiency on to the Russian temperament. Optimists pointed out that the reaction of the German people, suckled on *Mein Kampf* and its anti-Communist outbursts, would be a big factor affecting the situation favourably for the democracies ; pessimists retorted that the German people were so under Herr Hitler's heel that they would swallow anything, and that the Soviet rapprochement might even serve to mitigate the hatred of the underground Communist element in Germany against Nazi rule.

In short, during that last week of August every kind of opinion and speculation, foreboding or hope, was rife among the people of England and France. But growing out of them all came the conviction that the democracies were perhaps well out of any pact with totalitarian Russia, that Herr Hitler's bluff had been called, and that he had paid a high price for worthless cards. The position might even develop dangerously for him. Russia had had no cause to love Nazidom, nor had Nazis cause to love Communism ; yet the two were now bedfellows. A certain grim humour even began to be appreciated in the situation. Nazis with clenched fist and Communists crying "Heil Hitler !" must march together under the sign of "The Hammer and Swastickie." As a French paper wittily summed up, Russia had at last joined the Anti-Comintern Pact.

On the eve of the war, August 30th, the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact was formally ratified, but M. Molotov made the reassuring affirmation that it was not a pact of mutual assistance, merely of non-aggression. Next day, with the first German bombs on Poland, the long-threatened storm broke at last.

Two days later England and France, on Poland's behalf, were in a state of war with Germany. Behind Germany loomed Russia, her real intentions an enigma to friend and foe alike, known only in their entirety to one man Joseph Stalin, smiling in the Kremlin.

## APPENDIX

### THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

THE Treaty of Versailles did not deal, except incidentally, with the problems arising out of the liquidation of the Austrian Empire, nor with the territories of the two other enemy Powers—Turkey and Bulgaria—except in so far as it bound Germany to accept whatever subsequent settlement might be decided upon by the Allies in the case of these belligerents. It is divided into fifteen sections :

The first contains the Covenant of the League of Nations—to which functions are assigned in various places by the Treaty. The second describes the geographical frontiers of Germany, beginning at the north-eastern point of the present Belgian frontier. The third, which consists of twelve clauses, binds the Germans to accept the political changes in Europe brought about by the Treaty. It establishes two new States, Czecho-Slovakia and Poland, and provides for their recognition. It revises the basis of Belgian sovereignty and alters the boundaries of Belgium. It establishes new systems of government in Luxembourg and the Sarre Basin, and restores Alsace-Lorraine to France. It provides for possible additions of territory to Denmark, and binds Germany to recognize the independence of German Austria, and to accept conditions to be laid down as to those States or Governments which have created themselves since the Russian Revolution. The fourth section deals with the political reconstruction of the territories outside Europe affected by the war. It contains a general renunciation on the part of Germany of her possessions and rights abroad. By it she yields her Colonies to the Allies, together with her rights in Africa under the various international Conventions, which have regulated European enterprise in Tropical Africa. This section gives international recognition to the British Protectorate in Egypt, and annuls the Act of Algeciras, which was one step in the German policy of aggression which led to the War of 1914-18.

The fifth section sets forth the Military, Naval, and Air conditions of peace, limits the size of the German army and navy, and abolishes compulsory recruiting in Germany, as a first step towards general disarmament. The sixth imposes on all the signatory Powers the obligation to

maintain all graves of the fallen, and regulates the return of prisoners of war. The seventh deals with responsibilities and punishment, and provides for the trial of the ex-Emperor William. The eighth sets forth the reparation and restitution to be made by Germany, and contains special provisions relating to documents and war trophies seized by the Germans in earlier wars.

The ninth section contains financial clauses mainly designed to put into operation the provisions of the previous section. The tenth, which is of great length and complexity, contains the economic provisions and re-establishes the various non-political International Treaties and Conventions which, in such matters as posts, telegraphs, and sanitary regulations, have been binding on civilized Powers before the war. Attached to this section is a special provision to regulate the traffic in opium and similar drugs. The eleventh deals with aerial navigation.

The twelfth section contains clauses dealing with the international control of ports, canals, rivers, and railways, with special provisions for the Kiel Canal. The thirteenth contains the Labour Convention. The fourteenth contains the guarantees for the execution of the Treaty. The fifteenth is made up of a series of miscellaneous clauses, including the recognition of other subsequent Treaties of Peace and the confirmation of Prize Court decisions. The final clauses deal with the ratification and date of entering into force of the Treaty, both the French and English texts of which are recognized as authentic.

The following is an abstract of the official summary of the Treaty, omitting the First Section containing the Covenant of the League of Nations :

### *SECTION I*

#### THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

### *SECTION II*

#### BOUNDARIES OF GERMANY

The boundaries of Germany are described in two articles, one dealing with Germany proper and the other with East Prussia. The boundary lines between the new State of Poland and Germany and East Prussia respectively, and the new boundary line between East Prussia and Lithuania are shown approximately on an official map, and are described in detail in so far as they are not left to be settled by Boundary Commissions

on the spot. The boundary with Belgium follows the line described in the later section dealing with Belgium. The frontier with Luxembourg and with Switzerland is that of August 1914. The frontier with France is that of July 18th, 1870, with a reservation regarding the Sarre. The frontier with Austria is the same as that of August 3rd, 1914, up to the point where that of the new State of Czecho-Slovakia begins. The frontier of Czecho-Slovakia follows the old frontier between Germany and Austria up to the point where the new State of Poland begins. The boundary between Germany and Denmark and a portion of the boundary between East Prussia and Poland remain to be decided by the result of a plebiscite.

### SECTION III

#### POLITICAL CLAUSES : EUROPE

##### BELGIUM

Germany consents to the abrogation of the Treaties of 1839 (by which Belgium was established as a neutral State and her frontiers, etc., fixed), and agrees in advance to any Convention with which the Allies may determine to replace them. Germany also recognizes the full sovereignty of Belgium over the contested territory of Moresnet and over part of Prussian Moresnet ; and renounces in favour of Belgium all rights over Eupen and Malmedy, the inhabitants of which are to be entitled within six months to protest against this change either in whole or in part, the final decision to be reserved to the League of Nations. A Commission is to settle the details of the frontier, and various regulations for individual changes of nationality are laid down. Territories acquired by Belgium will be free of all obligations.

##### LUXEMBOURG

Germany renounces her various treaties and conventions with the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, recognizes that it ceased to be part of the German Zollverein from January 1st last, renounces all rights of exploitation of the railways, adheres to the abrogation of its neutrality, and accepts in advance any international agreements as to it reached by the Allied and Associated Powers.

##### LEFT BANK OF THE RHINE

As subsequently provided in the Military Section, Germany must not maintain or construct any fortifications less than fifty kilometres to the

east of the Rhine. In this area Germany may maintain no armed forces, either permanent or temporary, nor hold any manœuvres, nor maintain any works for facilitating mobilization. If the provisions of this Article are violated, she shall be regarded as committing a hostile act against the signatories of the Treaty, and as intending to disturb the world's peace. By virtue of the Treaty she must respond to any request for an explanation which the Council of the League of Nations may address to her.

#### THE SARRE

In compensation for the destruction of coal mines in Northern France and as payment on account of reparation, Germany cedes to France full ownership of the coal mines of the Sarre Basin with their subsidiaries, accessories, and facilities. Their value will be estimated by the Reparation Commission and credited against that account. The French rights will be governed by German law in force at the Armistice, excepting war legislation, France replacing the present owners, whom Germany undertakes to indemnify. France will continue to furnish the present proportion of coal for local needs, and contribute in just proportion to local taxes. The basin extends from the frontier of Lorraine as reannexed to France north as far as St. Wendel, including on the west the valley of the Sarre as far as Saarholzbach, and on the east the town of Homburg.

In order to secure the rights and welfare of the population and guarantee to France entire freedom in working the mines, the territory will be governed by a Commission appointed by the League of Nations, and consisting of five members, one French, one native inhabitant of the Sarre, and three representing three different countries other than France and Germany. The League will appoint a member of the Commission as Chairman, to act as executive of the Commission. The Commission will have all powers of government formerly belonging to the German Empire, Prussia, and Bavaria ; will administer the railroads and other public services, and have full power to interpret the Treaty clauses. The local courts will continue, but subject to the Commission. Existing German legislation will remain the basis of the law, but the Commission may make modifications after consulting a local representative assembly which it will organize. It will have the taxing power, but for local purposes only ; new taxes must be approved by this Assembly. Labour Legislation will consider the wishes of the local labour organizations, and the labour programme of the League. French and other labour may be freely utilized, the former being allowed to belong to French unions.

There will be no military service, but only a local gendarmerie to preserve order. The people will preserve their local assemblies, religious liberties, schools, and language; and may vote only for local assemblies. They will keep their present nationality except so far as individuals may change it. Those wishing to leave will have every facility with respect to their property. The territory will form part of the French customs system, with no export tax on coal and metallurgical products going to Germany, nor on German products for the Basin, and for five years no import duties on products of the Basin going to Germany or German products coming into the Basin for local consumption. French money may circulate without restriction.

After fifteen years a plebiscite will be held by communes to ascertain the desires of the population as to continuance of the existing régime under the League of Nations, union with France, or union with Germany. The right to vote will belong to all inhabitants over twenty resident therein at the signature. On the opinion thus expressed the League will decide the ultimate sovereignty. In any portion restored to Germany the German Government must buy out the French mines at an appraised valuation; if the price is not paid within six months thereafter, this portion passes finally to France. If Germany buys back the mines, the League will determine how much coal shall go to France.

#### ALSACE-LORRAINE

After recognition of the moral obligation to repair the wrong done in 1871 by Germany to France and the people of Alsace-Lorraine, the territories ceded to Germany by the Treaty of Frankfort are restored to France with their frontiers as before 1871, to date from the signing of the Armistice, and to be free of all public debts.

Citizenship is regulated by detailed provisions distinguishing those who are immediately restored to full French citizenship, those who have to make a formal application therefor, and those for whom naturalization is open after three years. The last-named class includes German residents in Alsace-Lorraine.

All public property and all private property of German ex-sovereigns passes to France without payment or credit. France is substituted for Germany as regards ownership of the railroads and rights over concessions of tramways. The Rhine bridges pass to France with the obligation for their upkeep.



## THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

For five years manufactured products of Alsace-Lorraine will be admitted to Germany free of duty to a total amount not exceeding in any year the average of the three years preceding the war, and textile materials may be imported from Germany to Alsace-Lorraine and re-exported free of duty. Contracts for electric power from the right bank must be continued for ten years.

For seven years, with possible extension to ten, the ports of Kehl and Strasboug shall be administered as a single unit by a French administrator appointed and supervised by the Central Rhine Commission. Property rights will be safeguarded in both ports, and equality of treatment as respects traffic assured the nationals, vessels, and goods of every country.

Contracts between Alsace-Lorrainers and Germans are maintained save for France's right to annul on grounds of public interest. Judgments of courts hold in certain classes of cases, while in others a judicial *consequatur* is first required. Political condemnations during the war are null and void, and the obligation to repay war fines is established as in other parts of Allied territory.

Various clauses adjust the general provisions of the Treaty to the special conditions of Alsace-Lorraine, certain matters of execution being left to conventions to be made between France and Germany.

## GERMAN AUSTRIA

The entire independence of German Austria is recognized by Germany.

## CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

Germany recognizes the entire independence of the Czecho-Slovak State, including the autonomous territory of the Ruthenians, south of the Carpathians, and accepts the frontiers of this State, as they may be determined, which in the case of the German frontier shall follow the old frontier of Bohemia in 1914. The usual stipulations as to acquisition and change of nationality follow.

## POLAND

Germany cedes to Poland the greater part of Upper Silesia, Posen, and the Province of West Prussia on the left bank of the Vistula. A field boundary commission of seven, five representing the Allied and Associated Powers, and one each representing Poland and Germany, shall be

constituted within fifteen days of the Peace to delimit this boundary. Such special provisions as are necessary to protect racial or religious minorities shall be laid down in a subsequent treaty between the Allied and Associated Powers and Poland.

#### EAST PRUSSIA

The southern and the eastern frontier of East Prussia as facing Poland is to be fixed by plebiscites, the first in the Regency of Allenstein between the southern frontier of East Prussia and the northern frontier of Regierungsbesirk Allenstein from where it meets the boundary between East and West Prussia to its junction with the boundary between the circles of Oletsko and Augersburg, thence the northern boundary of Oletsko to its junction with the present frontier, and the second in the area comprising the circles of Stuhm and Rosenberg and the parts of the circles of Marienburg and Marienwerder east of the Vistula.

In each case German troops and authorities will move out within fifteen days of the Peace and the territories be placed under an International Commission of five members appointed by the five Allied and Associated Powers, with the particular duty of arranging for a free, fair, and secret vote. The Commission will report the results of the plebiscites to the five Powers, with a recommendation for the boundary, and will terminate its work as soon as the boundary has been laid down and the new authorities set up.

The five Allied and Associated Powers will draw up regulations assuring East Prussia full and equitable access to and use of the Vistula. A subsequent Convention, of which the terms will be fixed by the five Allied and Associated Powers, will be entered into between Poland, Germany, and Danzig, to assure suitable railroad communication across German territory on the right bank of the Vistula between Poland and Danzig, while Poland shall grant free passage from East Prussia to Germany.

The north-eastern corner of East Prussia about Memel is to be ceded by Germany to the Associated Powers, the former agreeing to accept the settlement made, especially as regards the nationality of the inhabitants.

#### DANZIG

Danzig and the district immediately about it is to be constituted into the "Free City of Danzig," under the guarantee of the League of Nations. A High Commissioner appointed by the League and resident at

Danzig shall draw up a constitution in agreement with the duly appointed representatives of the city, and shall deal in the first instance with all differences arising between the city and Poland. The actual boundaries of the city shall be delimited by a Commission appointed within six months from the Peace, and to include three representatives chosen by the Allied and Associated Powers and one each by Germany and Poland.

A Convention, the terms of which shall be fixed by the five Allied and Associated Powers, shall be concluded between Poland and Danzig, which shall include Danzig within the Polish Customs frontiers, though with a free area in the port ; ensure to Poland the use of all the city's waterways, docks, and other port facilities, the control and administration of the Vistula and the whole through railway system within the city, and postal, telegraphic, and telephonic communication between Poland and Danzig ; provide against discrimination against Poles within the city, and place its foreign relations and the diplomatic protection of its citizens abroad in charge of Poland.

#### DENMARK

The frontier between Germany and Denmark is to be fixed in accordance with the wishes of the population, a vote being taken in Northern Slesvig as a whole and in portions of Central Slesvig by communes. Ten days from the Peace, German troops and authorities must evacuate the region north of the line running from the mouth of the Schlei, south of Kappel, Slesvig, and Friedrichstadt along the Eider to the North Sea south of Tonning ; and Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils in the zone must be dissolved. During the voting the zone will be under the charge of an International Commission of five members, of whom the Norwegian and Swedish Governments will be invited to choose two. The Commission will temporarily have general powers of administration. After the result of the voting has been declared, the Danish Government may occupy those territories which have opted for Denmark, and Germany shall renounce sovereign rights in these territories. All the inhabitants will then acquire Danish nationality, with certain exceptions. Provisions are made for individual change of nationality under certain conditions.

#### HELGOLAND

The fortifications, military establishments, and harbours of the Islands of Heligoland and Dune are to be destroyed, under the supervision

of the Allies, by German labour and at Germany's expense. They are not to be reconstructed, nor are any similar works to be constructed in the future.

#### RUSSIA

Germany is to recognize and respect the full independence of all the territories which formed part of the former Russian Empire. Germany is to accept definitely the annulment of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and of all Treaties or Agreements of all lands concluded by Germany since the Revolution of November 1917, with all Governments or political groups on territory of the former Russian Empire.

The Allies reserve all rights on the part of Russia for restitution and satisfaction to be obtained from Germany on the principles of the present Treaty.

### SECTION IV

#### POLITICAL CLAUSES OUTSIDE EUROPE

##### GERMAN RIGHTS OUTSIDE EUROPE

Outside Europe Germany renounces all rights, titles, and privileges as to her own or her allies' territories to all the Allied and Associated Powers, and undertakes to accept whatever measures are taken by the five Allied Powers in relation thereto.

##### COLONIES AND OVERSEAS POSSESSIONS

Germany renounces in favour of the Allied and Associated Powers her overseas possessions with all rights and titles therein, and undertakes to pay reparation for damage suffered by French nationals in the Cameroons or its frontier zone through the acts of German civil and military authorities and of individual Germans from January 1st, 1900, to August 1st, 1914.

#### CHINA

Germany renounces in favour of China all privileges and indemnities resulting from the Boxer Protocol of 1901 and the German concessions of Tientsin and Hankow, and in other Chinese territory except Kiao-Chau, China agreeing to open them to international use. She renounces in favour of Great Britain her State property in the British concession at

Canton, and of France and China jointly the property of the German school in the French concession at Shanghai.

#### SIAM

Germany recognizes that all agreements between herself and Siam, including the right of extra-territoriality, ceased on July 22nd, 1917.

#### LIBERIA

Germany renounces all rights under international arrangements regarding Liberia, more particularly the right to nominate a receiver of the customs, and disinterests herself in any further negotiations for the rehabilitation of Liberia.

#### MOROCCO

Germany renounces all her rights, titles, and privileges under the Act of Algeciras and the Franco-German Agreements of 1909 and 1911, and under all Treaties and arrangements with the Sherifian Empire. She undertakes not to intervene in any negotiations as to Morocco between France and other Powers, accepts all the consequences of the French Protectorate there, and renounces the capitulations. The Sherifian Government shall have complete liberty of action in regard to German nationals, and all German-protected persons shall be subject to the common law. All movable and immovable German property, including mining rights, may be sold at public auction, the proceeds to be paid to the Sherifian Government and deducted from the reparation account. Germany is also required to relinquish her interests in the State Bank of Morocco. All Moroccan goods entering Germany shall have the same privileges as French goods.

#### EGYPT

Germany recognizes the British Protectorate over Egypt declared on December 18th, 1914, and renounces as from August 4th, 1914, the capitulations and all the Treaties, Agreements, etc., concluded by her with Egypt. She undertakes not to intervene in any negotiations about Egypt between Great Britain and other Powers. She consents to the transfer to Great Britain of the powers given to the late Sultan of Turkey for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal. Arrangements for the disposal of property of German nationals are similar to those in the case of Morocco.

## TURKEY AND BULGARIA

Germany accepts all arrangements which the Allied and Associated Powers make with Turkey and Bulgaria with reference to any rights, privileges, or interests claimed in those countries by Germany, or her nationals, and not dealt with elsewhere.

## SHANTUNG

Germany cedes to Japan all rights, titles, and privileges, notably as to Kiao-Chau, and the railroads, mines, and cables acquired by her Treaty with China of March 6th, 1898, and by other agreements as to Shantung. All German State property, movable and immovable, in Kiao-Chau is acquired by Japan free of all charges.

## LIMITATION OF GERMAN ARMAMENTS

## SECTION V

## MILITARY, NAVAL, AND AIR

“ In order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations, Germany undertakes directly to observe the military, naval, and air clauses which follow.”

## MILITARY

The military terms provide for the demobilization of the German Armies and the imposition of other military restrictions, within two months of the signing of the Treaty (as the first step towards international disarmament). All compulsory military service is to be abolished in German territory, and recruiting regulations on a voluntary basis are to be incorporated into the German military laws, providing for the enlistment of non-commissioned officers and men for a period of not less than twelve consecutive years, and stipulating that officers shall serve for twenty-five years, and shall not be retired until the age of forty-five. No reserve of officers with war service will be permitted. The total number of German effectives is fixed at 100,000, including not more than 4,000 officers, and it is provided that there shall be no other military forces raised outside this figure. Increase in the number of customs, forestry officials, or police, or the military training of these services, is specially prohibited.

The function of the German Army is to keep internal order and control

of frontiers. The High Command is to confine itself to administrative duties, and it will not be allowed to retain a General Staff. Civilian personnel at the Ministry of War and similar institutions is to be reduced to one-tenth of that in 1913. There will be not more than seven infantry and three cavalry divisions, and not more than two Corps Staffs. Surplus war academies and schools for officers, cadets, etc., are to be suppressed, and the number of students admitted to the schools retained for the recruitment of officers is to be limited to the vacancies occurring in the establishments provided. The production of armaments, munitions, and material of war in Germany is limited to schedule, based on the amount considered necessary for an army on the scale decided upon. No reserves may be formed, and all existing armaments, guns, and stores above the limit fixed must be handed over to the Allies for disposal. No poisonous gas or liquid fire shall be manufactured or imported, nor any tanks nor armoured cars. The Germans are obliged to notify to the Allies for approval the names and situation of all factories manufacturing munitions, together with particulars of their output. Munitions for use in fortified works will be limited to 1,500 rounds apiece for guns of 10.5-cm. (about 4-inch) calibre and under, and 500 rounds for guns of a higher calibre. Germany is prohibited from manufacturing armaments and munitions for foreign countries, and from importing them from abroad. Germany must not maintain or construct any fortification situated on German territory less than fifty kilometres (31 miles) east of the Rhine, and in the above area no armed forces either permanent or temporary may be maintained. The *status quo* is to be preserved in respect of the fortifications on the original southern and eastern frontiers of the German Empire. No military manoeuvres may be held nor any permanent works kept for the purposes of helping mobilization. The demobilization of fortifications must take place within three months.

#### NAVAL

The naval terms provide that within two months the German naval forces in commission must not exceed six battleships of the *Deutschland* or *Lothringen* type, six light cruisers, twelve destroyers, and twelve torpedo boats, or an equal number of ships constructed to replace them. No submarines are to be included, and all other warships are to be placed in reserve or devoted to commercial purposes. Germany may keep in commission a fixed number of mine-sweeping vessels until the mines within certain specified areas in the North Sea and Baltic have been

swept up. After the expiration of two months the total exclusive personnel of the navy must not exceed 15,000, including a maximum of 1,500 officers and warrant officers. All German surface warships interned in Allied or neutral ports are to be finally surrendered. Within two months, certain additional warships enumerated in the Treaty and now in German ports will be surrendered at Allied ports. The German Government must undertake the breaking up of all German surface warships under construction. Auxiliary cruisers, etc., are to be disarmed and treated as merchant ships. Within one month all German submarines, salvage vessels, and docks for submarines capable of proceeding under their own power or of being towed must have been handed over at Allied ports.

The remainder of those under construction must be broken up by Germany within three months.

Material arising from the breaking-up of German warships may not be used except for industrial purposes, and may not be sold to foreign countries. Except under specified conditions for replacement, Germany is forbidden to construct or acquire any warships, and the construction or acquisition of any submarines whatever is prohibited. Vessels of war are only to have a fixed allowance of arms, munitions, and war material. All excess of arms, munitions, and war material is to be surrendered, and no stocks or reserves are allowed.

The personnel of the German Navy must be recruited entirely by voluntary engagements for a minimum period of twenty-five consecutive years for officers and warrant officers, and twelve consecutive years for petty officers and men, under various restrictions.

In order to ensure free passage into the Baltic, Germany is not to erect any fortifications in certain specified areas, nor to install any guns commanding maritime routes between the North Sea and the Baltic. Existing fortifications within those areas are to be demolished and guns removed. Other fortified works within 50 kilometres (31 miles) of the German coast or on German islands are to remain, as being of a defensive nature, but no new fortifications may be constructed and the armaments may not be increased. The maximum stocks of ammunition allowed for such defences are 1,500 rounds per piece for 4.1-inch guns and under, and 500 rounds per piece for guns exceeding that calibre.

The German wireless stations at Nauen, Hanover, and Berlin are not to be used for naval, military, or political messages without the assent of the Allied and Associated Governments during three months, but only



for commercial purposes under supervision. During the same period Germany is not to build any more high-power wireless stations.

Germany will be allowed to repair German submarine cables which have been cut, but are not being utilized by the Allied Powers, and also portions of cables which, after having been cut, have been removed, or are at any rate not being utilized by any one of the Allied and Associated Powers. In such cases the cables or portions of cables removed or utilized remain the property of the Allied and Associated Powers, and accordingly fourteen cables or parts of cables are specified which will not be restored to Germany.

### AIR

The air clauses provide that the armed forces of Germany must not include any military or naval air forces. Germany is, however, to be allowed to maintain a maximum of 100 unarmed seaplanes up to October 1st, 1919, to be exclusively employed in searching for submarine mines. The entire personnel of the air forces in Germany is to be demobilized within two months, except for a total of 1,000 men, including officers, which may be retained up to October.

The aircraft of the Allied and Associated Powers are to enjoy full liberty of passage and landing over and in the territory and territorial waters of Germany until January 1st, 1923, unless prior to that date Germany is admitted to the League of Nations or is permitted to adhere to the International Air Convention.

The manufacture of aircraft and parts of aircraft is forbidden throughout Germany for six months.

All military and naval aircraft (including dirigibles) and aeronautical material are to be delivered to the Allied and Associated Governments within three months, except for the 100 seaplanes already specified.

## SECTION VI

### PRISONERS OF WAR

The repatriation of German prisoners and interned civilians to be carried out by a Commission composed of representatives of the Allies and the German Government, together with local sub-commissions. The Allies and the German Government are to respect and maintain the graves of all soldiers and sailors buried in their territories, and to recognize and assist any Commissions appointed by the Allies in connexion with

them, agreeing also to give any practicable facilities for removal and reburial.

### SECTION VII

#### RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE CRIMES OF THE WAR

The Allies publicly arraign the ex-Emperor William II "for a supreme offence against International Morality and the Sanctity of Treaties."

The ex-Emperor's surrender is to be asked for from the Dutch Government, and a special Tribunal is to be set up, consisting of one judge from each of the five Great Powers. The tribunal is to be guided by the highest principles of international policy, and is to have the duty of fixing whatever punishment it thinks should be imposed. Military tribunals are to be set up by the Allies to try persons accused of acts of violation of the laws and customs of war, and the German Government is to hand over all persons so accused. Similar tribunals are to be set up by any particular Allied Power against whose nationals criminal acts have been committed. The accused are to be entitled to name their own counsel, and the German Government is to undertake to furnish all documents and information the production of which may be necessary.

### SECTION VIII

#### REPARATION AND RESTITUTION

The Allied and Associated Governments affirm, and Germany accepts, the responsibility of herself and her Allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her Allies.

While the Allied and Associated Governments recognize that the resources of Germany are not adequate, after taking into account permanent diminutions of such resources which will result from other treaty claims, to make complete reparation for all such loss and damage, they require her to make compensation for all damage caused to civilians under seven main categories :

(a) Damage by personal injury to civilians caused by acts of war, directly or indirectly including bombardments from the air.

(b) Damage caused to civilians, including exposure at sea, resulting from acts of cruelty ordered by the enemy, and to civilians in the occupied territories.

(c) Damages caused by maltreatment of prisoners.

(d) Damages to the Allied peoples, represented by pensions and separation allowances capitalized at the signature of this Treaty.

(e) Damages to property other than naval or military materials.

(f) Damage to civilians by being forced to labour.

(g) Damages in the form of levies or fines imposed by the enemy.

Germany further binds herself to repay all sums borrowed by Belgium from her Allies as a result of Germany's violation of the Treaty of 1839 up to November 11th, 1918, and for this purpose will issue at once and hand over to the Reparation Commission 5 per cent. gold bonds falling due in 1926.

The total obligation of Germany to pay, as defined in the category of damages, is to be determined and notified to her after a fair hearing, and not later than May 1st, 1921, by an Inter-Allied Reparation Commission. At the same time a schedule of payments to discharge the obligation within thirty years shall be presented. These payments are subject to postponement in certain contingencies. Germany irrevocably recognizes the full authority of this Commission, agrees to supply it with all the necessary information, and to pass legislation to effectuate its findings. She further agrees to restore to the Allies cash and certain articles which can be identified.

As an immediate step towards restoration, Germany shall pay within two years 1,000,000,000 pounds sterling in either gold, goods, ships, or other specific forms of payment, this sum being included in and not additional to first 1,000,000,000 bond issue referred to below, with the understanding that certain expenses, such as those of the armies of occupation and payments for food and raw materials, may be deducted at the discretion of the Allies.

"In periodically estimating Germany's capacity to pay, the Reparation Commission shall examine the German system of taxation, first, to the end that the sums for reparation which Germany is required to pay shall become a charge upon all her revenues, prior to that for the service or discharge of any domestic loan, and, secondly, so as to satisfy itself that in general the German scheme of taxation is fully as heavy proportionately as that of any of the Powers represented on the Commission."

"The measures which the Allied and Associated Powers shall have the right to take, in case of voluntary default by Germany, and which Germany agrees not to regard as acts of war, may include economic and financial prohibitions and reprisals, and in general such other measures

as the respective Governments may determine to be necessary in the circumstances."

The Commission shall consist of one representative each of the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Belgium, a representative of Serbia or Japan taking the place of the Belgian representative when the interests of either country are particularly affected, with all other Allied Powers entitled, when their claims are under consideration, to the right of representation without voting power. It shall permit Germany to give evidence regarding her capacity to pay, and shall assure her a just opportunity to be heard. It shall make its headquarters at Paris; establish its own procedure and personnel; have general control of the whole reparation problem; and become the exclusive agency of the Allies for receiving, holding, selling, and distributing reparation payments. Majority vote shall prevail, except that unanimity is required on questions involving the sovereignty of any of the Allies, the cancellation of all or part of Germany's obligations, the time and manner of selling, distributing, and negotiating bonds issued by Germany, any postponement between 1921 and 1926 of annual payments beyond 1930, and any postponement after 1926 for a period of more than three years, the application of a different method of measuring damage than in a similar former case, and the interpretation of provisions. Withdrawal from representation on the Commission is permitted upon twelve months' notice.

The Commission may require Germany to give, from time to time, by way of guarantee, issues of bonds or other obligations to cover such claims as are not otherwise satisfied. In this connexion and on account of the total amount of claims, bond issues are presently to be required of Germany in acknowledgment of its debt as follows:

1,000,000,000 pounds sterling, payable not later than May 1st, 1921, without interest.

2,000,000,000 pounds sterling bearing  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. interest between 1921 and 1926 and thereafter 5 per cent., with a 1 per cent. sinking fund payment beginning in 1926; and

An undertaking to deliver bonds to an additional amount of 2,000,000,000 pounds sterling bearing interest at 5 per cent. under terms to be fixed by the Commission.

Interest on Germany's debt will be 5 per cent. unless otherwise determined by the Commission in the future, and payments that are not made in gold may "be accepted by the Commission in the form of properties, commodities, businesses, rights, concessions, etc." Certificates

of beneficial interest representing either bonds or goods delivered by Germany may be issued by the Commission to the interested Power. As bonds are distributed and pass from the control of the Commission, an amount of Germany's debt equivalent to their par value is to be considered as liquidated.

#### SHIPPING

The German Government recognizes the right of the Allies to the replacement, ton for ton and class for class, of all merchant ships and fishing-boats lost or damaged owing to the war, and agrees to cede to the Allies all German merchant ships of 1,600 tons gross and upwards, one-half of her ships between 1,600 and 1,000 tons gross, and one-quarter of her steam trawlers and other fishing-boats. These ships are to be delivered within two months to the Reparation Commission, together with documents of title evidencing the transfer of the ships from encumbrance. "As an additional part of reparation" the German Government further agrees to build merchant ships for the account of the Allies to the amount of not exceeding 200,000 tons gross annually during the next five years. All ships used for inland navigation taken by Germany from the Allies are to be restored within two months, the amount of loss not covered by such restitution to be made up by the cession of the German river fleet up to 20 per cent. thereof.

#### DEVASTATED AREAS

Germany undertakes to devote her economic resources directly to the physical restoration of the invaded areas. The Reparation Commission is authorized to require Germany to replace the destroyed articles by the delivery of animals, machinery, etc., existing in Germany, and to manufacture materials required for reconstruction purposes—all with due consideration for Germany's essential domestic requirements.

#### COAL, ETC.

Germany is to deliver annually for ten years to France coal equivalent to the difference between annual pre-war output of Nord and Pas de Calais Mines and annual production during about ten years. Germany further gives options over ten years for delivery of 7,000,000 tons coal per year to France in addition to the above of 8,000,000 tons to Belgium, and of an amount rising from 4,500,000 tons in 1919 to 1920 to 8,500,000 tons

in 1923 to 1924 to Italy at prices to be fixed as prescribed in the Treaty. Coke may be taken in place of coal in ratio of three tons to four. Provision is also made for delivery to France over three years of benzol, coal, tar, and sulphate of ammonia. The Commission has powers to postpone or annul the above deliveries should they interfere unduly with industrial requirements of Germany.

#### DYE-STUFFS AND CHEMICAL DRUGS

Germany accords option to the Commission on dye-stuffs and chemical drugs, including quinine, up to 50 per cent. of total stock in Germany at the time the Treaty comes into force, and similar option during each six months to end of 1924 up to 25 per cent. of previous six months' output.

#### CABLES

Germany renounces all title to specified cables, value of such as were privately owned being credited to her against reparation indebtedness.

#### SPECIAL PROVISIONS

As reparation for the destruction of the Library of Louvain, Germany is to hand over manuscripts, early printed books, prints, etc., to the equivalent of those destroyed. In addition to the above, she is to hand over to Belgium the wings now at Berlin belonging to the altarpiece of the Adoration of the Lamb, by Hubert and Jan Van Eyck, the centre of which is now in the Church of St. Bavo at Ghent, and the wings now at Berlin and Munich of the altarpiece of the "Last Supper," by Dirk Bouts, the centre of which belongs to the Church of St. Peter at Louvain. She must also restore within six months the Koran of the Caliph Othman, formerly at Medina, to the King of the Hedjaz, and the skull of the Sultan Mkwawa, formerly in German East Africa, to His Britannic Majesty's Government.

And she must restore to the French Government certain papers taken by the German authorities in 1870, belonging then to M. Rouher, and to restore the French flags taken during the war of 1870-71.

#### SECTION IX

##### FINANCE

Powers to which German territory is ceded will assume a certain portion of the German pre-war debt, the amount to be fixed by the Repara-

tion Commission on the basis of the ratio between the revenues of the ceded territory and Germany's total revenues for the three years preceding the war. In view, however, of the special circumstances under which Alsace-Lorraine was separated from France in 1871, when Germany refused to accept any part of the French public debt, France will not assume any part of Germany's pre-war debt, nor will Poland share in certain German debts incurred for the oppression of Poland. The value of German Government property in ceded territory will in general be credited to Germany on account of Reparation, but no credit will be given for the German Government property in Alsace-Lorraine. Mandatory Powers will not assume any German debts or give any credits for German Government property. Germany renounces all right of representation on, or control of, State banks, Commissions, or other similar international financial and economic organizations.

Germany is required to pay the total cost of the Armies of Occupation from the date of the Armistice as long as they are maintained in German territory, and this cost is to be a first charge on her resources. The cost of reparation is the next charge, after making such provisions for payments for imports as the Allies may deem necessary.

Germany is to deliver to the Allied Powers all sums deposited in Germany by Turkey and Austria-Hungary in connexion with the financial support extended by her to them during the war, and to transfer to the Allies all claims against Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, or Turkey in connexion with agreements made during the war. Germany confirms the renunciation of the Treaties of Bucharest and Brest-Litovsk.

On the request of the Reparation Commission Germany will expropriate any rights or interests of her nationals in public utilities in ceded territories or those administered by mandatories, and in Turkey, China, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Bulgaria, and transfer them to the Reparation Commission, which will credit her with their value. Germany guarantees to repay to Brazil the fund arising from the sale of Sao Paulo coffee which she refused to allow Brazil to withdraw from Germany.

## SECTION X

### ECONOMIC CLAUSES

The Treaty contains detailed provisions for securing that Germany shall not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against the trade of Allied and Associated countries. Vessels of the Allies are to enjoy both national

and most-favoured nation treatment in Germany for at least five years, and this provision will continue thereafter on condition of reciprocity, unless revised by the Council of the League of Nations. As regards fishing, coasting trade, and towage, most-favoured nation treatment is to be accorded for the same period as for Customs matters.

Provision is made for the recognition by Germany of ships' certificates, and of the places of registry of ships belonging to States without a sea board.

Germany also undertakes to protect the trade of the Allies against unfair competition, and in particular to suppress the use of false markings and indications of origin and, on condition of reciprocity, to respect the laws and judicial decisions of Allied and Associated States in respect of regional appellations of wines and spirits. And she will not impose on the nationals of the Allied States or their property any restrictions which were not in force before the war or any taxes, unless those restrictions and taxes are applied to her own nationals. Nor may she impose restrictions in regard to the exercise of occupations which are not applicable to all foreigners. These provisions are to be in force for a period of five years and, if a majority of the Council of the League of Nations so decides, for an additional period not exceeding five years. German nationality shall not continue to attach to a person who has become a national of an Allied or Associated State.

The following are the provisions relative to pre-war debts. Clearing offices are to be established within three months in Germany and in each Allied or Associated State which adopts the plan, and the settlement of pre-war debts and other specified pecuniary obligations will take place through these offices, direct settlement being prohibited. The adjustment of the proceeds of the liquidation of enemy property will also be made through these offices. Each participating State is to take responsibility for obligations of the kinds referred to on the part of its nationals towards nationals of the opposing States, except in cases where at the outbreak of war the debtor was insolvent. Claims are to be discussed between the Clearing Offices of the two countries concerned, and failing agreement, are to be submitted to arbitration or to the Mixed Arbitral Tribunal referred to below. The sums due to the nationals of each country are to be paid by the Clearing Office in that country, and the sums owing by such nationals are to be debited to it. Debts are to be paid in the currency of the Allied country concerned, and the rate of exchange to be adopted, failing specific provision in the contract, is to



be the average cable transfer rate prevailing in that country during the month immediately preceding the outbreak of war between the country in question and Germany. It is optional with any Allied Power to participate in the above system.

#### ENEMY PROPERTY

The action of liquidation, control, etc., taken in the Allied countries and in Germany in regard to enemy property and businesses under exceptional war measures is confirmed, subject to compensation in respect of loss to the property, etc., of Allied nationals, to be determined by the Mixed Arbitral Tribunal and charged upon the property of German nationals which is under the control of the claimant's State. Any compensation due to her own nationals is to be paid by Germany.

All action of liquidation, control, etc., in Germany is to be stayed, and the Allied property, if not completely liquidated, is to be restored. Nationals of countries which did not make any general liquidation of German property may require the restoration, if possible, of their actual property by the German Government, in whosoever hands it may now be. Stipulations are included for the protection of returned property and businesses in Germany in the future.

The Allies reserve the right to retain and liquidate all German property within their territory. The net proceeds of sales of such property, both during and after the war, are to be credited to Germany, and to be applied by each State to the satisfaction of claims by its nationals with regard to their property in Germany or debts owing to them by Germans.

#### CONTRACTS

Pre-war contracts between Allied nationals and German nationals are in general cancelled as from the date at which the parties became enemies. Exception is made in the case of agreements for the transfer of real or personal property, where the property therein had already passed, leases of land and houses, contracts of mortgage, pledge or lien, mining concessions, contracts with Governments and public bodies, and insurance contracts. In regard to the last-named class of contracts, detailed provision is made as indicated below.

Fire insurance contracts are not considered dissolved by the war, even if premiums have not been paid, but lapse at the date of the first annual premium falling due three months after the Peace. Life insurance contracts are not dissolved merely by reason of the war. Marine insurance

contracts are dissolved by the outbreak of war, except where the risk had already attached.

A Mixed Arbitral Tribunal is to be established to decide all disputes relating to contracts made before the date of the Treaty of Peace between nationals of the Allied States and German nationals, so far as they do not fall within the jurisdiction of Allied or Associated or Neutral Courts.

### INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY

Rights in industrial, literary, and artistic property are re-established, but subject, in the case of German-owned rights, to the effect of the special war measures of the Allies, the right of imposing on German patents and copyrights conditions in the public interest or to secure the fulfilment of Germany's obligations is reserved. Extensions of time are given for the accomplishment of formalities, for the working of patents, and for securing rights under the international conventions. Except as between the United States of America and Germany, pre-war licences are cancelled, subject to the right of the old licensee to demand a new licence on terms to be specially settled ; and except as between the same countries the right to sue for infringement committed during the war is not recognized.

### OPIUM

The High Contracting Powers who have not signed or ratified the Opium Convention of 1912 agree to bring it into force.

## SECTION XI

### AERIAL NAVIGATION

Aircraft of the Allied and Associated Powers shall have full liberty of passage and landing over and in German territory, equal treatment with German planes as to use of German aerodromes, and with most-favoured nation planes as to internal commercial traffic in Germany. Germany agrees to accept Allied certificates of nationality, airworthiness, or competency and licences, and to apply the convention relative to aerial navigation concluded between the Allied and Associated Powers to her own aircraft over her own territory. These rules apply until 1923, unless Germany has since been admitted to the League of Nations or to the above Convention.

## THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

## SECTION XII

## PORTS, WATERWAYS, AND RAILWAYS

Germany is required to grant freedom of transit and full national treatment to persons, goods, vessels, rolling stock, etc., coming from or going to any Allied or Associated State and passing in transit through German territories. Goods in transit are to be free of Customs duties. Rates of transport are to be reasonable, and no charges or facilities are to depend directly or indirectly on the flag of the vessel. Provisions are made against discrimination by control of transmigrant traffic ; and all kinds of indirect discrimination are prohibited.

International transport is to be expedited, particularly for perishable goods. There is to be no discrimination in transport charges and facilities against Allied ports.

Free zones in German ports are to be maintained, and adequate facilities are to be provided for trade requirements without distinction of nationality. Only certain limited charges are permissible in free ports.

The Elbe, from the junction of the Vltava (Moldau) and the Vltava below Prague ; the Oder, from its confluence with the Oppa ; the Niemen, below Grodno ; and the Danube, below Ulm, are declared international, together with the portions of their affluents. Nationals, property, and flags of all States are to be treated on a footing of perfect equality with subjects, etc., of the riparian States and various conditions are imposed to ensure facilities and reasonable charges and the maintenance of navigation, under the supervision of the League of Nations, and of International Commissions. These are to meet in the near future to prepare projects for the revision of the existing agreements, which are temporarily to remain in force.

Germany is to hand over within three months from notification a proportion of its river shipping, tugs, and material.

In the case of the Danube, the former Commission is to resume its pre-war powers, but only Great Britain, France, Italy, and Roumania are to be represented on it. From the point where the competence of the Commission ceases, an International Commission is to be appointed to administer the whole Upper Danube, until a definitive Statute is arrived at.

Provision is also made for a deep-draught Rhine-Danube Canal, should it be decided to construct it within twenty-five years.

The Rhine and the Moselle form the subject of a special series of

clauses. The Convention of 1868 is in general to remain in force, with important modifications; the expanded Central Commission is to sit at Strasbourg, France to name the President. As Holland is party to this Convention, the modifications are subject to her assent.

Within three months, Germany is to hand over to France a proportion of tugs and river shipping from the Rhine harbours, or shares in German navigation companies. A proportion of buildings, tugs, etc., owned by Germans in Rotterdam harbour on August 1st, 1914, or shares in such concerns, are similarly to be handed over.

France is to have full rights all along her own frontier to use water from the Rhine for canals, etc., and to carry out works for deriving motive power, subject to certain payments and to the consent of the Commission.

Germany is to undertake to make no canals on the right bank opposite the French frontier, and to grant France certain privileges on the right bank for the establishment of certain engineering works, subject to the payment of compensation. Switzerland is also entitled to demand similar rights for the upper part of the river.

If within twenty-five years Belgium decides to construct a Rhine-Meuse Canal, the German Government is bound to construct such parts of it as fall within German territory, according to plans drawn up by the Belgian Government, expenses to be divided among the various States.

Germany is to make no objection to the Commission extending its jurisdiction if desired to the Lower Moselle (with the consent of the Luxembourg Government), to the Upper Rhine (with the consent of the Swiss Government), and to the lateral canals and waterways which may be constructed to improve navigation.

The German Government is to lease to the Czecho-Slovak Republic, for ninety-nine years, areas in the harbours of Hamburg and Stettin as free zones.

### RAILWAYS

The Railway Clauses provide that goods consigned from or to Allied States to or from Germany, or in transit through Germany, are entitled generally to the most favourable conditions available.

Certain railway tariff questions are dealt with.

When a new Railway Convention has replaced the Berne Convention of 1890, it will be binding on Germany; in the meantime she is to follow the Berne Convention.

Germany is to co-operate in the establishment of passenger and luggage services with direct booking between Allied States over her territory, under favourable conditions, as well as emigrant train services.

Germany is to fit her rolling stock with apparatus allowing of its being incorporated in Allied goods trains, and *vice versa*, without interfering with the brake system. Provision is made for the handing over of the installations of lines in transferred territory, and of an equitable proportion of rolling stock for use therein. Commissions are to settle the working of lines linking up two parts of one country and crossing another, or branch lines passing from one country to another.

In the absence of particular agreements, Germany is to allow such lines to be built or improved as may be necessary to ensure good services between one Allied State and another, if called upon to do so within twenty-five years with the concurrence of the League of Nations, the Allied States concerned paying the cost.

Germany is to agree, at the request of the Swiss and Italian Governments, to the denunciation of the 1909 Convention as to the St. Gothard route.

As a temporary arrangement, Germany is to execute instructions given in the name of the Allies as to transport of troops, material, munitions, etc., transport for revictualling of certain regions, and re-establishment of normal transport, postal, and telegraphic services.

Finally, Germany is to agree to subscribe to any General Conventions regarding the international regime of transit, waterways, ports, or railways which may be concluded by the Allies (with the approval of the League of Nations) within five years.

Differences are to be settled by the League of Nations. Certain specified articles, e.g. those providing for equal treatment in matters of transit and transport, are subject to revision by the League of Nations after five years. Failing revision, they will only continue in force in relation to any Allied State which grants reciprocal treatment.

#### THE KIEL CANAL

The Kiel Canal is to remain free and open to ships of war and merchant shipping of all nations at peace with Germany. Subjects, goods, and ships of all States are to be treated on terms of equality in the use of the Canal, and charges are to be limited to those necessary for the upkeep and improvement of the Canal, for which Germany is to be responsible. In cases of violation of these provisions, or disagreements as to them,

States concerned may appeal to the jurisdiction established by the League of Nations, and may demand the appointment of an International Commission.

### SECTION XIII

#### THE LABOUR CONVENTION

Under the provisions of the Labour Convention :

1. An International Conference is to be held annually to propose labour reforms for adoption by States composing the League of Nations.

2. There is to be a governing body to act as executive and to prepare the agenda for the Conference, and an International Labour Office for the collection and distribution of information and reports. The head of this office will be responsible to the governing body.

3. The Annual Conference will consist of four representatives from each State, two for the State and one each for employers and employed. Each delegate may vote independently. The Conference will have the power to adopt by a two-third majority recommendations or draft conventions on labour matters. Recommendations or draft conventions so adopted must be brought by each State before the authority or authorities within whose competence the matter lies for the enactment for legislation or other action. If a draft convention receives the approval of the competent authority, the State in question is under obligation to ratify it and to carry it into effect. Should any State fail to observe the above obligations, it will be open to the governing body to appoint a Commission of Inquiry, as a result of whose findings the League of Nations may take economic measures against the offending State.

4. Special provision is made to prevent any conflict with the constitution of the United States or other Federal States.

5. To meet the case of countries where climate, imperfect industrial development, or other special circumstances render labour conditions substantially different from those obtaining elsewhere, the Conference must take the difference into account in framing any convention. A protocol attached to the Convention provides that the first meeting shall be at Washington in the present year, and sets up an International Organizing Committee for that purpose. The protocol also contains the agenda for the first meeting, which includes the principle of the eight-hour day, the question of unemployment, and of the employment of women and children, especially in dangerous trades.

Appended to the section concerning the Labour Convention is an affirmation by the High Contracting Parties of the methods and principles for regulating labour conditions, which all industrial communities should endeavour to apply so far as their special circumstances permit. Amongst these are that labour should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce ; the right of association for all lawful purposes for the employer as well as for the employed ; the payment to the employed of a wage implying a reasonable standard of life, as understood in their time and country. The adoption of an eight-hour day or a forty-eight-hour week where it has not already been attained ; the adoption of a weekly rest of at least twenty-four hours, including Sunday where practicable. The abolition of child labour and the limitation of the labour of the young, so as to permit the continuance of their education and proper physical development. The principle of equal pay for men and women for equal work. Any legal standard for conditions of labour to have regard in each country to the equitable economic treatment of all workers resident therein. The provision by each State of a system of inspection for the protection of the employed, in which women should take part.

## SECTION XIV

### GUARANTEES

#### WESTERN EUROPE

As a guarantee for the execution of the Treaty, German territory to the west of the Rhine, together with the bridge-heads, will be occupied by Allied and Associated troops for fifteen years. If the conditions are faithfully carried out by Germany, certain districts, including the bridge-head of Cologne, will be evacuated at the expiration of five years ; certain other districts, including the bridge-head of Coblenz, will be evacuated after ten years, and the remainder, including the bridge-head of Mainz, will be evacuated after fifteen years. In case the Inter-Allied Reparation Committee finds that Germany has failed to observe the whole or part of her obligations, either during the occupation or after the fifteen years have expired, the whole or part of the areas specified will be reoccupied immediately. If before the expiration of the fifteen years Germany complies with all the undertakings resulting from the present Treaty, the occupying forces will be withdrawn immediately.

## EASTERN EUROPE

Similarly, all German troops at present in the territories to the east of the new frontier shall return as soon as the Allies think the moment suitable. They are to abstain from all requisitions, etc., and are in no way to interfere with such measures for national defence as may be adopted by the provisional Governments concerned.

## OCCUPATION OF TERRITORY

All questions regarding occupation not provided for by the Treaty will be regulated by a subsequent convention or conventions which will have similar force and effect.